

**Addis Ababa University**  
**College of Humanities, Language Studies, Journalism and**  
**Communication**

**A Postmodernist Reading of Selected Ethiopian Novels in English**  
**A Dissertation Submitted to the Department of Foreign Languages**  
**and Literature**

**By**

**Liknaw Yirsaw Wubie**

**June 2020**

**Addis Ababa, Ethiopia**

**A Postmodernist Reading of Selected Ethiopian Novels in English**

**A Dissertation Submitted to the Department of Foreign Languages and  
Literature in Fulfillments of the Requirements for the Degree of Doctor of  
Philosophy in Literature**

**By**

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**June 2020**

**Addis Ababa, Ethiopia**

## **Declaration**

I, the undersigned, declare that “A Postmodernist Reading of Selected Ethiopian Novels in English” is my own original work which has not been submitted for any degree in any other university, and all the sources I have used have been indicated and duly acknowledged.

Name: Liknaw Yirsaw Wubie

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: June 2020

Place: Addis Ababa University

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## ***Abstract***

*This study has been designed to make a modest attempt which could add contributions on some of the practices that can make Ethiopian literature in English into its stature. In other words, this study has been attempted because researchers in most of the time are not zealous on Ethiopian literature in English. The study has been employing postmodernism as a tool of analysis, for postmodernism is primarily inaugurated for giving fair attention for the marginalized literatures like Ethiopian literature in English. Therefore, the analysis in this dissertation has been made on selected Ethiopian Novels in English in line with postmodern narrative strategies. Thus, the chief postmodern narrative strategies reflected in the novels include; interrogating the historical, political, religious and cultural realities; magical realism in relation to fantasy, irony and blackhumour; metafiction, historiographic metafiction, maximalism, fragmentation, intertextuality and the denial of superior over inferior cultural presentations. Therefore, the novels have been read in line with basic postmodern narrative strategies. On top of their own differences, all the four novels are similar in relation to reflecting major postmodern narrative strategies. In simple terms, though there are some differences among the individual novels selected for the dissertation, they are equally appropriate to be read as postmodern texts.*



## **Chapter One: Introduction**

### **1.1. Background of the Study**

The strategic document provided by Ellene et al. (2003) on culture and media states that Ethiopia has a remarkable place in African vernacular literature. As per this document, Ethiopian vernacular literature has been introduced in 1908 by Afework Gebre Yesus. This document further emphasises that Ethiopian vernacular literature is the first of its kind in Africa. Therefore, Ethiopia has a long literary tradition which had been started before Africa's literary exposure to the outside world especially to the European colonizers. This concept is strengthened by Zarandona (2009: 9):

The introduction of writing skills to Africa was by no means a consequence of Western colonization. For example, a substantial amount of poetry had previously been written in the Islamised areas of black Africa, using the Arabic script. And prior to that, the written art had been known and widely practised in the oldest Christian country of the continent, Ethiopia.

Despite such an age old literary tradition, Ethiopia has young, probably infant, literature in English even in contrast to literature in other African countries. Compared to international and continental levels, let alone critiques or research works on Ethiopian literature in English, even writing practices on Ethiopian literature in English, is not that well-established (Tewodros 2002). He states this:

It is after a long tradition of Amharic literature that Ethiopian literature in English came to the scene. Some researchers who looked into the English literature activity of this country argue that Ethiopian literature in English is an outcome of the past decade or so.... And this type of Literature is a development of the sixties (ibid: 3).

In addition, compared to the written literatures of other African countries' literatures and to Ethiopian indigenous literatures, the idea of the recent introduction of Ethiopian literature in English is also affirmed by (Gerard, 1986:982):

Literature in a European language evolved in Ethiopia in the early 1960s, adding to the country's literary tradition which stretches back to almost two thousand years...Contemporary Ethiopian authors have turned to English...as other African authors to use English or French in order to attempt international recognition.

This recent introduction of Ethiopian literature in English has been emphasised by Chris Beckett, who has participated in Anglo Ethiopian Society, the organization which has been inaugurated to make Ethiopian literature part of the international literature through translation and writing practices in English. He writes:

What I found was that not much Ethiopian literature is available in English! There are a few novels/short stories written in English, like Dagnachew Worku's *The Thirteenth Sun* (1973) and Hama Tuma's *The Case of the Socialist Witchdoctor and Other Stories* (1993); also Nega Mezlekia's memoir, *Notes from the Hyena's Belly* (2000); and more recently Dinaw Mengistu's prize-winning novel *Children of the Revolution* (2007) and Maaza Mengiste's *Beneath the Lion's Gaze* (2010); retrieved on May 23, 2018, [www.anglo-ethiopian.org](http://www.anglo-ethiopian.org).

Ethiopian literature in English is not only a recent introduction to the literary tradition; it is also the experience and practice of very few personalities. Though the difference is not that much significantly visible at present, many individuals did not actively participate during the introduction period of the literary tradition of Ethiopian literature in English. (Tadesse, 1995: 91) may be indirectly related to this point of argument:

Five years after the bloody Ethiopian Revolution, B.M. Sahle Sellassie's fourth and latest novel, *Firebrands*, was published. It is quite a considerable achievement for Sahle Sellassie to have published these four novels [*Afersata*, *Warrior King*, *Shinega's Village* and *Firebrands*], considering the fancy that he writes in a country where the number of novels written in English totally fewer than ten, and his works account for nearly half of that number.

Apart from appreciating the individual writer, Sahle Sellassie Berhane Mariam, it could be understood that Ethiopian literature in English in its introductory period was not a tradition in which many individuals actively involved. This may be attributed to its recent introduction in the

literary tradition of the country, or it may be for the reason related to the absence of colonial experience. Unlike other African countries, Ethiopia is a country where colonial experience is not experienced. Had colonial practice in Ethiopian been experienced, it could have paved the platform of writing in English as it led some other African countries to practise writing in English. In other words, unlike the advanced colonial experiences, practised in other African countries, Ethiopia has not had colonial experiences. Ethiopian literature has thus been written predominantly in native languages. This in turn might have made Ethiopian literature less accessible to researchers who have not had an opportunity to understand ideas stated through the native Ethiopian languages. The following extract elaborates this idea:

A series of critical studies on Ethiopian literary works is very useful and indeed necessary, given the fact that Ethiopian creative writing and literature is well- developed and has deep and fascinating historical roots. This large corpus is not well known outside the country, partly because it presumes knowledge of the Ethiopian languages in which the literature was written... It is ironic and unfair that Ethiopia has remained at the back stage of African literature partly because of its not having adopted a colonial language for its creative writing (Tadesse and Ali, 1998:2-3).

The need for a language in which the literary product is written is apparently not the only factor which led Ethiopians to practise writing in English. There might have been some other factors which led Ethiopians to use English language in their writings. Zarandona's (2009) contention can support this point of argument:

As a result of the aftermath of World War II, English replaced French as the official second language of Ethiopia, and the language was officially used in all secondary and higher education, as well as in the diplomatic sphere and much of the business sector. In 1961, Haile Selassie I University (now Addis Ababa University) was inaugurated. Its English Department was initially able to stress a high standard of competence in the language and encouraged creative writing in English through a number of publications, notably the literary journal *Something* (ibid: 12).

Coupled with the less recognition of Ethiopian literature in the eyes of critics because of the language in which the literary texts have been written, the need for the English language in the political and socio-economic engagements of the Ethiopians might have led them to practise

writing in English. This has paved the ways which initiated the Ethiopians to exert their effort to write in English. This is the way that has taken to the inauguration of Ethiopian literature in English. It is possible to substantiate this assertion with the following quote.

Ethiopian literature in English has been inspired partly by the fact that for some time English has been the accepted second language of Ethiopia and the language primarily used in secondary and higher education. Moreover, the impetus that has moved other African writers to use English or French as their medium in order to reach an international rather than only local audience has been felt by Ethiopian authors. Neither Ge'ez nor Amharic with their unique scripts is known to many people outside of Ethiopia (Beer, 1975: 3).

According to Zarandona (2009) and Beer (1986), together with other works translated from Ge'ez and Amharic into English, Ethiopian writers have begun to write literary works in English since the early 1960s. They list out the following literary texts as having been written in English in the introductory stage of Ethiopian literature in English. Hereunder are some of the works listed as per their years of publication. In other words, some of the works as per the years of publication with the respective authors are mentioned below.

*Confession* (1962) - a novel (probably the first Ethiopian novel in English) by Ashenafi Kebede, the plays: *Tewodros* (1963) and *Azmari* (1963) by Tsegaye Gebre Medhin, *Shinega's Village* (1964) - a short story by Sahile Silassie Berhane Mariam, *Oda–Oak Oracle* (1965)- a play by Tsegaye Gebre Medhin, *The Afersata* (1968)- a novel by Sahile Silassie Berhane Mariam, *Prayer* (1969) – a poetry book by Solomon Deressa, *The Thirteenth Sun* (1973)- a novel by Dagnachew Worku, the novels, *Defiance*(1974) and *Warrior King* (1974) by Abe Gubegna and Sahile Silassie Berhan Mariam respectively , and the play, *Collision of Altars* (1977) by Tsegaye Gebre Medhin are some of the literary works of Ethiopian literature in English in its introduction period. Since then, lots have been written in all genres of literature.

Writings in English have thus been attempted for the last four or five decades, yet only some studies have been made on Ethiopian literature in English, and it has not been taken as a well-established serious research area. First, compared to Western literature, African literature in general is under researched. The extract below further expresses the idea that shows the western critics' less attention towards African literature.

When we study how the western critics view Africa in general and African writing in English in particular, we feel as if the continent is kept somehow outside of history and that ‘Africa is no historical part of the world’... This kind of western thinking and ‘Image of Africa’ sometimes keeps African literature also out of academic discussion and even after the overwhelming interest in African writing in English (Sharma, 2012: 71-73).

Let alone in international standards, even at the continental level, compared to other African countries, the aforementioned problem, or the less scholarship given to Ethiopian literature in the research and academic arenas, is an issue to ponder over. Ethiopian literature in English has not got equivalent chance as “Critics of African literature ignore us completely. To them African means West African, especially Nigerian; Kenyan; and South Africa” (Fekade, 1985:37). This could show the idea that though attempts in making research on Ethiopian literature in English have been made, literary researches on Ethiopian literature in English have not been emphasised. Let alone in international levels, as it is mentioned above, even it is not in a better situation when studies made on Ethiopian literature are compared in African standard too. Negligence towards Ethiopian literature has been felt in Ethiopia, Africa and the entire world equally alike. This is the argument shared by Beer’s contention:

When Sahile Silassie’s third novel, *Warrior King*, was published by Heinemann in late 1974, its arrival in Addis Ababa was announced by a three-line comment in the classified ads column of the English-language Ethiopian Herald. This is sadly typical of the sparse attention most Ethiopian writers command inside and outside their country whether they write in English, or in Amharic, the official language, and one can sympathize with authors like Solomon Dressa and Mengistu Lema who lament that critics of African literature ignore the existence of a rich corpus of creative writing in Ethiopia (Beer, 1977: 99).

As it has been attempted to establish a background in the consecutive discussions above, though some attempts to writing in English are there, it is possible to notice that criticism on Ethiopian literature in English is not yet seriously taken into consideration. This is the basic gap, which this study aims to fill. This is made from the vantage point of the newly inaugurated literary approach- postmodern literary theory.

The researcher assumes that it is through the lens of postmodern literary theory the marginalized literature like Ethiopian literature in English could be better explored. As stated before, Ethiopian literature in English is not mostly taken as points of emphasis because of the Eurocentric standard in which it is viewed. In most of the cases, western's point of view cares little study Ethiopian literature in its own settings. On the other hand, postmodernism literary theory, used as a tool of analysis for this study, is mainly designed to interrogate this and other similar western based ideas. Thus, it enables the researcher to challenge ideas like western literary standards could not be taken as models which the entire world appreciates. Because considering literature all over the world from only the western perspective starkly contradicts with the simple fact that nations across the globe have their own respective traditions which could be discerned in their writings.

So, with no rejection of basic concepts of universal literary conceptions and traditions, postmodern insights create awareness on the idea; every nation has its own literary tradition to exercise literature. Also, in this fast internationally globalized world, the entire world has different nations where there is a chance to influence and be influenced. Therefore, our world is expected to be in a transcultural mood where the various cultural elements of the entire world are equally celebrated so that one's literature is not expected to be sacrificed by standards which may fit to only some others' literatures.

In addition, all traditions of nations could equally be kept important in intercultural exchanges. In other words, taking postmodern insights into consideration, though different nations in the world are expected to exchange literary traditions, they are not expected to take only western literary tradition as a worldwide measurement of evaluation. Thus, the issue is similar to Ethiopian literature in English. Therefore, Ethiopian literature in English could be studied and be seen in its own sakes, and the researcher believes that a better framework of analysis to do so is postmodernism.

Moreover, in our way to the practice of transculturalism, there may be cases in which some considerations are made upon untranslated areas of knowledge of a certain nation. There may be cases in which one nation can take ideas from others. In other words, postmodernism is not designed for the total rejection of the universal, conventionally accepted literary concepts of literature. It is designed to take modifications or some adjustments on wrongly constructed

structures in literature. In line with postmodern thoughts, transcultural practising of literature suggests that nations have a right to exercise their own literary practices as per their local settings without negatively influencing others'. All the elements and concerns of literary traditions of a certain nation are not expected to be evaluated in line with other nations' mode of evaluation. The researcher therefore believes this notion is very important to study Ethiopian literature in English.

Postmodernism is designed to interrogate the validity and rationality behind modernism. Thus, in the interpretation and analysis of literary texts through such an approach, any systematic attempt to show the mismatch between the theoretical rationality of modernist philosophy and irrational practical happenings of this philosophy will be taken into account. However, there are controversial stands regarding what postmodernism actually means. Some have the perception of taking postmodernism as a reactionary philosophy over modernism; while, others take it as the extension and advanced form of modernism. According to Gerard (2000), as quoted in Hossain and Karim (2013), "some scholars identified postmodernism as a new trend and others said that it is not a phase beyond modernity but represents the most advanced, and possibly final, stage of modernity" (ibid. 2013:1).

Consequently, postmodernism in this study is used as an approach designed to face-off the problems associated with totalitarian thinkings that impose just one universally conventional tradition for this entire world though lots of variants are there. And postmodernism in this study is also viewed as the interrogation of thinkings that consider the ontology related to realities vis-a-vis grand narratives. Grand narratives are considered as canonic narratives that the entire literary tradition across the globe should take into account. However, postmodernism has been designed to provide challenges on grand narratives. Thus, as it is stated before, this study is carried out through a close reading of selected Ethiopian novels in English from the vantage point of chief postmodern narrative strategies. Therefore, the study entitled with "**A Postmodernist Reading of Selected Ethiopian Novels in English**", will contribute some sorts of insights on Ethiopian literature in English in relation to this window of criticism-postmodernism.

## 1.2. Statement of the Problem

As has been stated in the background, though its English counterpart is not well developed, Ethiopian vernacular literature is believed to be the first and advanced component of African vernacular literature. Yet, criticism on Ethiopian literature especially Ethiopian literature in English is still scanty. As a result, Ethiopian literature is out of the international academic discourses. Let alone expecting abundant researches on it, even Ethiopian literature in English itself is a recent phenomenon (Tewodros, 2002; Beer, 1975; Huntsberger, 1973; and Gerard, 1986).

Compared to other African countries' literatures, Ethiopian literature in English is in its infancy stage. As it has been indicated in the background, this comes down to the recent introduction of English in Ethiopia and other reasons; like, the absence of colonial experience. In contrast to experiences which have been well practised in other African countries, Ethiopia is a country where colonial experiences were not practised. However, as Nigistie (2016) explains, though Ethiopia is not a colonized country, it concerns effects of colonialism similarly other colonized countries in Africa practise colonial matters. Ethiopians may practise remnants of colonialism in the form of post revolution or neocolonialism. The extract taken from Nigistie (2016) below strengthens this idea.

It is hardly possible for Ethiopian literature to apply major concerns of African literature in the way they are presented. This is because Ethiopian Literature, having its own unique characteristics, departs from that of world and African literature; however it falls in the same category in the continental divisions. The first unique character of Ethiopian Literature is the absence of colonial experience in the country. But here we can replace the term post colonial by post revolutionary to address... abuse of political power which was a case in Ethiopia too (ibid: 4).

Practically, Ethiopian is not a country which could be free from the remnants of colonizers' experience. It may be practised in any form mentioned above; western imperial experiences have been practised here in Ethiopia. This idea of Ethiopian's exposure to the western experience in different modalities is further explained by Addisu (2012:22); hereunder is the quote taken from the paper acknowledged here.



In every corner of Ethiopia, people talk about their resistance to imperialism, their capability of preserving and transmitting their religions, traditions and culture in general to generations. However, all these are ironical. The contrary of what is supposed to be real. The youth, who is assumed to be the next defendant against any interference into indigenous culture, is aping the west and letting him/her into cultural imperialism.

The point here is Ethiopians are in a state of claiming that they are free from any foreign adulteration while they are practically immersed in foreign experiences in a situation where their experience to foreign exposure is not recognized as part of the international discussions and researches. Thus, though it is not well recognized as an indispensable part of international discussions and researches, Ethiopian literature in English is expected to portray this notion better. Therefore, comparing studies on other African countries, Ethiopian literature in English is simply sidelined.

Researchers might have their own justifications for being less zealous to Ethiopian literature in English. Ethiopian literature in English is often set aside while researchers include other African countries' literatures in English in their studies. This may be due to the infant status where Ethiopian literature in English is in contrast to other African countries and in the world at large. However, it is through persistent discussions and attempts in research give better stature to Ethiopian literature in English. In other words, one is not supposed to leave Ethiopian literature aside in the name of "standards". If one likes to bring Ethiopian literature in English into good profile, he/she needs to work on it, and the current research is a modest attempt in this regard. In this regard, postmodernism which is taken as a tool of analysis for this study does not aspire to evaluate literature through one mode of evaluation. As indicated in the background, postmodernism claims that there is no one universally accepted measurement of evaluation. Each tradition could frame its own parameter accordingly. This conforms to Fekade who argues against Lukacs's criteria for labeling literary pieces great.

One cannot be sacrificed for the other if the writer wants to achieve the portrayal of 'the complete human personality' with all its failures and successes, its complexities and conflicts... why 'models' or 'theories' which emerge from different socioliterary conditions cannot be applied without appropriate modifications. Needless to say they are helpful since they inform and guide the search for one's approaches (Fekade, 1988: 6-7).

Similar to the point Fekade makes, in postmodernism, there is more than one mode of evaluation. One should have its criterion other than taking the other's parameter. One's parameter may have nothing to do with the other. If one won't evaluate something in its own right, it may lead it to a negative sacrifice-a sacrifice which does not bring value for itself other than being a binary pair. This is the concept what postmodernism asserts.

Bringing the above case into play in most cases, the rejection of Ethiopian literature in English from studies and academic discussions has been done with the researchers' intention of taking the imposed universal standards. However, the standards could not practically be standard of measurement without modifications. This is so because, for one thing, one's standard is not basically the standard of evaluation for the other (Sharma, 2012; Fekade, 1985; Beer, 1977). Regardless this notion, Ethiopian literature in English is not mostly taken as the concerns of critics in African and international standards. Let alone, expecting most advanced researches made upon Ethiopian literature in English, even most of the universities in Ethiopia till now, do not have organized teaching material for the course, 'Survey of Ethiopian Literature in English'.

In addition, the so called standards that scholars set might also be in ironies. Though researchers and scholars leave Ethiopian literature aside from their academic discussions due to these standards, for they find Ethiopian literature unfit, the case could be reversed. The following consecutive quotations assert this notion. According to Sharma, "Though the Ethiopian fiction in English is one of the lesser known participants in the multitude of the African fiction scene, yet the new breed of writers will certainly make a mark" (2012: 75). This comes down to writing tarnished images articulated like this one:

In most modern books there seems to be preconcerted understanding to calumniate and disgust the world with abominable pictures of the ruined Ethiopian.... There seems to be a worldwide conspiracy in literature to conceal the facts.... Because of this suppression of truth, world crimes have been easily made possible against the Ethiopians. These people are held in low estimation because truth is hidden which proves that today though more favored races are at the apex of human accomplishment; yet in the earlier ages the wheel of destiny carried upward... (Houston, 2004: 9).

This idea may be related to the status that Ethiopia had had in the long distant periods. It is known that Ethiopia has been a point of attention in the eyes of classic giants including Homer, whose works especially the *Iliad* and *Odyssey* are taken as canons in world literature. In Book I of the *Iliad*, there is a narrative that tells “Zeus”- the king of gods, along with all the other gods, leaves Greece for twelve days, for visiting the Ethiopians who are depicted as "blameless people". While these facts as acknowledged above are there, the very low state of scholarship given to Ethiopian literature in English is a paradox.

Thus, the foregoing and other related ideas state things ironically. Things may have different notions from the way they are normally expected to be through the ‘standards’ which could not be standards for the entire world. As Dagmawi et al. (2010) state, Ethiopians have a feeling that the outside world has left their big achievements though they have contents which could be made points of discussions in regional and international arenas. The following direct quote from the source referred above explains this idea. Dagmawi et al. (2010:8) clearly puts the idea in a nutshell:

Ethiopians speak to each other and to the world. In ways that very few societies can, modern Ethiopians have seen the world through a multi-colored stained glass. They look back to a time when theirs was one of the richest and most powerful in the world, and have seen it too as one of the poorest and least understood. They speak of pride and struggle, conquest and famine, nationalism and intense division, loss and longing.

As to the knowledge of the researcher based on his attempt of reading as cited so far, the issue of Ethiopian literature in general and Ethiopian literature in English in particular seems less studied because of the imposed so called ‘standards’ framed from exclusive views of the westerners’ . And as it has been explained so far, the postmodern point of view which is endorsed as a tool of criticism for this study enables the researcher to give Ethiopian literature in English a fair attention. In this attempt to making: **A Postmodernist Reading of Selected Ethiopian novels in English**, four Ethiopian Novels in English (*Borrowing Freedom*, *The Thirteenth Sun*, *Land of the Yellow Bull* and *Eyes and Mist*) are selected. Except *The Thirteenth Sun*, the novels are less studied. In addition, the novels are selected here because no one before has approached them from the vantage point of postmodernism.

As sources acknowledged so far indicate, it seems true that research works on Ethiopian novels in English from postmodern viewpoints are not yet done; even there are not adequate research works on the theory, postmodernism itself too. Regarding this assertion, Nicol (2009: 10) states “though the term ‘postmodernism’ is still an important one in a number of academic disciplines and remains essential in the literary studies lexicon, the topic of postmodernism is no longer hotly debated in academic journals and research monographs”. This insufficiency of researches related to postmodern theory is further strengthened by one local researcher, Zewde (2017: 3):

Even if the tradition of putting into practice the aesthetic features of postmodernism in the production and critical studies of literature in the west has been there at a wide range for decades, works that are related to postmodernism notions and researches that have been undergone in the areas of postmodernism appear scanty.

Such pressing matters justify and necessitate this study is expected to have its own contribution in narrowing the knowledge gap of postmodernism especially in practising the theory in relation to Ethiopian literature. This would be justifiable; because, in contrast to other literary theories, here in Addis Ababa University, postmodern literary theory is not mostly practised in the literary studies. There are some considerable studies on other literary theories like, Feminism, Postcolonialism, Marxism, Psychoanalysis, issues related to Narratology and etc. in literary studies than studies from postmodern perspectives.

To put the statement in a nutshell, the less studied feature of Ethiopian novels in English in general and the absence of studies on Ethiopian literature in English from postmodernists view point in particular have triggered the study to be on **A Postmodernist Reading of Selected Ethiopian Novels in English**. The present study will have its own contribution to the practice of criticism on Ethiopian literature in English from the vantage point of postmodern narrative strategies. Consequently, this study has been designed to achieve the following research objectives in relation to the selected novels.

### **1.3. Objectives of the Study**

The general objective of this study is related to explore the selected novels in line with basic postmodern narrative strategies. Thus, the following specific objectives have been deduced to meet the overall objective of the study. Thus, this study has been designed to:

- interpret the novels under study on the basis of chief postmodern narrative strategies;
- discuss narratives in the novel that interrogate grand narratives;
- deal with intertextual, defamiliarized, metafictional and satiric narratives;
- show how culture and reality are represented in the novels; and
- compare and contrast the novels in line with postmodern narrative strategies.

### **1.4. Research Questions**

In the attempt to meet the research objectives, the following research questions are addressed.

- What major postmodern narrative strategies are reflected in the novels under study?
- Are there defamiliarized, intertextual, metafictional, satiric, and etc. narrative strategies?
- Are grand narratives interrogated in the novels?
- How are culture and reality represented?
- What are the differences and similarities among the novels in line with postmodern narrative strategies?

### **1.5. Significance of the Study**

This study is expected to have its own significances for the students of Literature to understand how the knowledge of postmodernism is used in the interpretation and analysis of literary texts. In addition, this study will be a source for researchers in Literature in general and Ethiopian literature in English in particular and other related disciplines for further investigations on issues pertaining to this theory and on the novels selected too.

## 1.6. Delimitation of the Study

The scope of this study is delimited to the analysis and interpretation of the sample novels in relation to basic postmodern narrative strategies. Therefore, the study focuses on exploring the selected novels from the vantage point of salient postmodern narrative strategies as per the formulated theoretical frameworks.

## 1.7. Methodology and Procedures

Taking the nature of the formulated research objectives and questions into consideration, this study is theoretical, analytical and descriptive in nature. Thus, the research employs a qualitative research method. The main task in this research is exploring and describing selected literary texts in light of concepts and theories in postmodernism. The main method of analysis in this study is textual analysis which is known as a method focusing on the interpretation of textual data or concepts within texts. Hence, data presented in the novels are interpreted through close reading of the novels based on the formulated postmodern theoretical framework of this study. As per the source acknowledged below, theoretical framework is an important issue on qualitative research discussions.

There are many ironies in qualitative research. One of the most interesting is that although selecting the right research method is far less important to qualitative researchers than it is to those with a quantitative bent, the field has produced an unbelievable number of research methods. For many qualitative researchers it is their general frame-work or paradigm that is most important to them. If they are devoted to a particular research method, it is often because that method is an expression of their paradigm (Willis, 1996: 147).

In relation to the selection technique made upon the novels selected for this study, the novels, *Borrowing Freedom* (2016) by Mindaralew, *Eyes and Mist* (2012) by Tariku, *Land of the Yellow Bull* (2003) by Fikeremarkos and *The Thirteenth Sun* (1973) by Dagnachew are selected. As it has been mentioned in the statement part, it may be because of their recent years of publication (excluding *The Thirteenth Sun*, and *Land of the Yellow Bull* to some extent), researches especially researches from postmodern perspectives upon the novels are not yet conducted, and the general narrative strategies reflected in the selected novels are discussed in the next section.

### 1.7.1. Basis of Selection

Here, one may need a basement of selection. In postmodern thought, having postmodern narrative strategies is enough to get the novels fit for purpose. For one thing, postmodernism as a style does not give credit for standards in the selection of texts as point of analysis. This is because of the postmodern assumption that the standard used for labeling one text may not be applicable to the other. In other words, postmodernism has nothing to do with issues related to standard. “Whose perspective is taken as a yardstick to say, this text is canonic, and this one is not canonic”; is highly interrogated in postmodern thought. From the very beginning, as skeptic features are there in postmodern thoughts, postmodernism has had the intention of challenging, at least reconsidering, ideas designed on the already canonized literature in particular and life at large. Cumulatively, the researcher has taken the novels under discussion as his point of attention in this study because of the major postmodern narrative strategies briefly elaborated below.

With the relatively long plot, or the plot which has maximalism as its feature, *Borrowing Freedom* is full of ironies. These ironies are manifested between the antagonists and protagonists namely, the leaders with their political supporters and The Sage’s group including Agodo, Ashton and some other individuals. This is due to these consecutive ironies, discrepancies, uncertainties and unusual events in relation to human rationality which is related to the interrogation of reality in the narrative process of the incidents and events lead the novel to be labeled under the category of postmodern texts. This type of plot development is appropriate to be read from postmodern view points. And that is why the researcher has got the desire of approaching this novel in his agendum of reading Ethiopian novels in English from postmodern view points.

In addition, there are clear indicators which could enable the researcher to treat the novel, *Borrowing Freedom*, as postmodern text. In the plot of the novel, there are narratives where the very essences of postmodernism and postmodern era are directly stated. The direct narratives on the very essences of postmodernism and postmodern era, in turn, enable the researcher to label the novel as a postmodern text so that the novel is a novel which could be read under the notion of postmodernism. This essence of postmodernism is dealt with ideas related to the reaction that Agodo, one of the protagonists characters, reacts when he is asked to react on ‘what borrowing freedom’ is. According to the narrative addressed by Agodo, borrowing freedom is the title of

Agodo's paper. He has written the paper as an opponent of the political system of his country, Ajeebuax. In turn, it is from this title of Agodo's paper that the title of the novel at large is made to be *Borrowing Freedom*.

Moreover, as has been discussed so far, postmodernism is a theory which focuses on unusual modes of narration which deviates from the normal or conventionally accepted ways narrating. However, it does not mean that the deviation is made for nothing. As a style, deviation should have a purpose. The novel selected for this discussion has some features in this regard. At the end of the story, the phrase: "**The Beginning**" is written. Normally, this is unnatural to get this phrase or words at the end of texts. So it is something which could be considered as deviation, and this is one typical feature of postmodern texts. In this case, though art in general focuses on deviation, deviation in postmodernism is deliberately projected, and this is reflected in the text under discussion.

It is not for nothing that the word, '**Beginning**' appears. This word may technically suggest that the beginning of a narrative which is totally different from the previous narrative treated in the story. As it has been mentioned before, the story comes to an end with the winner of the ideas of the protagonist/The Sag's group which is different from the political philosophy used in Ajeebuax, the country where the story in the whole course of the narrative process is set. One may technically guess that the winner will bring a different narrative from the narrative that the characters went through. This, in turn, technically indicates intertextuality-one basic narrative feature of postmodern texts.

The narrative feature of leaving audiences to fill the gap and to think how the plot line of the story will be is one basic feature of postmodernism. Postmodern texts leave the reader in an open ended manner than exposing audiences with one fixed and absolute ending of the narrative. Thus, audiences will have a mental gym through which they intellectually guess narratives on the next plot line.

Furthermore, having uninterrupted dialogue within three or so consecutive chapters is not normal. For example, starting from chapter forty-one to chapter forty-three, there are uninterrupted dialogues between Minister Domuni and Chebodi. And as is already mentioned, this is unnatural to get this extensive dialogue between two individuals. Surprisingly, the dialogue is experienced through telephones. There are evidences from the text where the



characters are informed about the extensive narrative time they consumed in the narrative process. Surprisingly, that the interactants went through the dialogue is not enough so that they are forced to keep their dialogue on after taking some two hours of sleeping. Therefore, this is unnatural to get a dialogue presented in three and so chapters uninterruptedly; in turn, this is one typical feature of postmodern texts related to the concept of maximalism.

In short, the ideas explained so far are not the only exemplary narrative strategies which enable the researcher to read the novel, *Borrowing Freedom*, from the viewpoint of postmodernism. There are other textual indicators which play a vital role in the categorization of the novel under the category of postmodern texts. These and other similar features of postmodern narratives depicted in the novel are going to be included in the detailed discussion in the consecutive analysis chapters.

Similar to the above general postmodern narrative features of the novel, *Borrowing Freedom*, the following postmodern narrative strategies are reflected in the second novel, *Land of the Yellow Bull*. Coupled with other features, the narrative is not arranged in linear narratives and some other narrative features are disclosed in the form that can satisfy postmodern styles of narratives. The most abundant postmodern feature reflected in the novel is related to the representation of culture.

The major characters especially, Charlotte and Delti are characterized from the two extreme corners of cultural differences. Charlotte is from United Kingdom; whereas, Geldi is from Ethiopia more specifically from Hamar. Let alone westerners' categorization of culture as superior over inferior cultural presentation in westerners' mind, taking Anteneh's, a character from Menz, central Ethiopia, point of view for granted, people from Ethiopia even think the Hamar culture is in the extreme corner different from the mainstream culture.

In *Land of the Yellow Bull*, the cultural differences are not presented in the way that our narrative tradition is conventionally structured. Mostly narratives have been made in the way that can show the categorization of culture as one is superior over the other. There are the experiences of different cultures across the globe, while one is inferior to the other. Normally, the western culture is considered superior culture which could be taken as the bench mark of change and modernization. Hence, people from the wrongly labeled inferior culture are supposed probably forced to assimilate themselves to the culture of the people from the so called superior culture. In

other words, there are experiences in which western culture is a culture that should be acculturated as the world's mode of life so that people other than this culture are expected to assimilate themselves to the west culture. However, the narrative what is reflected in the novel, *Land of the Yellow Bull*, is totally different from the point discussed here. One may normally expect that the people in Hamar, especially Delti, will be immersed in the cultural experiences of Charlotte, since she is from the western world that is conventionally understood as civilized. However, the reverse is clearly depicted in the novel.

As indicated in the synopsis of the novel, in the narrative, Charlotte has highly been swallowed into the cultural practices of Delti in particular and the Hamar people in general. She is affiliated to the culture of the Hamar society to the extent of hating her own English culture. After the presentation of her research, she has decided to return to Hamar. This way of narration is a narrative which could be taken under the discussions of postmodern texts. It is directly related to the denial of superior over inferior cultural presentation, one chief narrative strategy of postmodernism.

The third novel is Dagnachew Worku's novel, *The Thirteenth Sun*. It is characterized with the following narrative strategies of postmodern texts. In other words, because of the following basic features employed in the narrative of the novel, *The Thirteenth Sun* is a novel which could be read from the vantage points of postmodern narrative strategies.

To begin with, Debebe (1994) stated, and as it could be inferred from the novel, the word "Sun" is used metaphorically to mean month. Therefore, transitively, the novel, *The Thirteenth Sun*, would be understood as "The Thirteenth Month", and it is something strange or defamiliarized because it is normally know that a year is composed of twelve months. As a postmodern text, the phrase *The Thirteenth Sun/Month* is a phrase which foregrounds something strange, and it is one of the typical features of postmodern texts.

The other strange concept in relation to the narrative process of the novel is related to the date of celebration of the anniversary of Saint Abbo. As per the title of the novel, *The Thirteenth Sun*, one could expect that the anniversary of Saint Abbo is celebrated in one of the days of the thirteenth month of Ethiopian. This is so since the Fitawrari has gone for getting a healing for his illness during the anniversary of the Saint in the thirteenth sun/month. However, the date on which the anniversary of Saint Abbo is celebrated is totally different from the practice that

Ethiopians normally do. As per Ethiopian calendar, Ethiopians celebrate the Saint's day (the anniversary of Saint Abbo) on two days (Tikimit 5 and Megabit 5) in a year. However, as it is explained above, as per the title of the novel, one could understand the anniversary of Saint Abbo be celebrated in the thirteenth month (in Pagume-the thirteenth month of Ethiopia). As per Ethiopian calendar, Pagume is a month composed of 5 days for three consecutive years and 6 days on the fourth regular periodic round of years. Narrating the story as if the anniversary of Abbo were celebrated in the thirteenth month of Ethiopia is something unfamiliar, and it is fitting to the narrative strategies of postmodern texts.

Moreover, as it is inferred from the end and introductory part of the narratives of the novel, the author has used the title, *The Thirteenth Sun*, from the billboard advertisement, “**Thirteen Months of Sunshine**” that Ethiopians used to attract tourists to the country though this is now replaced by an arguably more expressive one-**Land of Origins**. From this phrase especially from the word “sunshine”, one may expect that the story development of the novel is something positive. However, most of the narratives of the story are situated in despairing, distorted, and pessimistic moods. This is a narrative which is appropriate to be read from the vantage point of postmodernism. Because postmodern criticism projects life as the celebration of the world as a disordered, confused, despaired cumulatively ironical experiences. In other words, the postmodern way of criticism considers life as the experience of happenings totally different from what they are normally anticipated to be.

In general, narrative features discussed so far are not the only postmodern narrative features reflected in the novel under this point of discussion; there are other postmodern narrative features too. The novel, *The Thirteenth Sun*, is a novel which has narrative features which could be categorized under postmodern narrative strategies.

The following discussion is related to the narrative features of the fourth novel selected for the analysis and interpretation of the study. The novel selected in this respect is, *Eyes and Mist*, and it has the following basic postmodern narrative strategies. From the very beginning, the name of the author is written in defamiliarized way of naming. The name is written as “Tariku Abas Etenesh” where the surname, ‘Etenesh’, is made to be the name of his mother. This is unfamiliar in the Ethiopian naming style. For that matter, writing his name and his father's name could have been enough. However, in the novel, the name of the author's mother is written as a

surname, and this is unusual to get such naming style. The name of the female in the Ethiopian naming style is not culturally allowed to be used. This is applicable when the name of the father is not known. If not, surprisingly, using female's name as a father and surname in Ethiopia could lead a structural negative connotation.

Consequently, the one who uses his/her mother's name instead of his /her father's for naming is culturally less recognized by connoting that either his/her father is not known, or he/she is ashamed of his/her father. In other words, he/she is born of illegitimate. In addition, he/she may be labeled as he /she is the one who is ashamed of his/her father because he/she is a born of unofficial relationship of the couples. Even when anyone's father is not known, or if anyone is ashamed of his/her father for some reasons, he/she will use the name of his maternal grandfather. The name of the one who has had a contribution to the childhood period of the individual could be used. Using mothers' name in Ethiopian naming style is less likely, and very few people are doing this. Surprisingly, the name of the author's mother is made as if it were the name of his grandfather. Providing narratives in a defamiliarized way like the idea explained so far is one typical feature of postmodern texts. Thus, the novel, *Eyes and Mist*, has one possibility to be analyzed from postmodern view points.

In addition, as it has been indicated in the introductory part of this chapter, the narrative in this novel is situated in a fragmented manner where the setting is situated in almost all different parts of the world, namely Africa, Asia, America and Europe. With the fragments in places, the characters especially the major ones in the story are going through lots of conspiracies and chaos where friendship and the rationality behind the human mind and morality are highly interrogated. Moreover, the narrative times are not also in linear style in which the different narrative incidents are achronologically arranged. In turn, all these are typical features of postmodern narrative strategies.

For the other thing, as it is known, mostly in literary studies, purposive sampling is recommended to select texts to the analysis purpose. As long as any text has postmodern narrative strategy in its narrative, it has a possibility to be made as point of discussion in line with postmodernism. Hence, the novels selected so far have narrative features which are fit to be discussed under the notion of postmodernism. The aforementioned novels are purposively selected for analysis and interpretation in the interest of this study.

### **2.7.2. Analysis Procedures**

Some basic analytical procedures for this study have been followed. First, the theoretical framework in relation to basic postmodern narrative strategies has been formulated. Then, an analysis and interpretation of the selected novels has been made through close reading of the novels as per the formulated theoretical framework of the designed postmodern narrative strategies in this study.

After discussing the basic postmodern narrative strategies briefly in the theoretical framework, they are thematically categorized in independent chapters for the analysis purpose. Because, all the basic postmodern narrative strategies could not be addressed in a single chapter, for it could not be friendly to readers. Hence, on the basis of their common share that they focus on the reconsideration of realities behind the uncertain and indeterminate nature of reality, interrogating reality and fragmentation, as basic postmodern features, are treated in one chapter. In other words, interrogating reality and fragmentation are thematically related concepts so that they could be treated in chapter four.

Similarly, magical realism, intertextuality and metafiction are the basic postmodern narrative strategies which could be addressed in one chapter, for they can share the self- reflexivity features of postmodern texts, and these postmodern narrative features are more of form related traits of postmodernism. These postmodern features are treated in another independent chapter, chapter five.

Moreover, maximalism and the postmodern representation of culture/denial of superior over inferior cultural presentation are treated in one individual chapter. These postmodern narrative strategies in this study are taken as distinguishing postmodern narrative features among the selected novels. In other words, these are narrative strategies upon which the difference between /among the selected novels in line with postmodernism in concern could be discussed. Maximalism and denial of superior over inferior culture representations as chief postmodern narrative features would take their own share in the analysis and interpretation portion of the dissertation. Thus, chapter six, the final chapter of the analysis will deal with these concepts, and it is from these three consecutive analysis chapters the precise conclusion in chapter seven is dealt with.

In general, this study is a qualitative research; thus, the analysis is made through descriptions and explanations which bases on close reading of the selected novels as per the theoretical frameworks of the study. In other words, the analysis upon the texts is made through detail descriptions applying the thematically categorized postmodern theoretical frameworks framed in this study. So far, issues in relation to the background, statement, objectives, research questions, significances and methodology of the study have been dealt. Likewise, the next part of this paper presents a review of related studies.

## Chapter Two: Review of Related Literature

This chapter deals with studies that are related to the current research. It reviews studies, articles and critical comments related to researches on postmodernism as a window of criticism and studies on Ethiopian literature in English in general, more specifically; it makes brief exploration on studies made on the novels. Ethiopian literature in English from a postmodern point of view, some reviews of related works on Ethiopian literature in English in general, studies on postmodernism, and studies on the novels selected to this study are concisely covered in this chapter.

Debebe's (1980) is the first local research on Ethiopian literature in English. And this paper tries to address the status and the factors which have their own bearing on the scanty state of Ethiopian literature in English. During the introductory period of Ethiopian literature in English, Ethiopian Poetry in English seems relatively better in corpus than prose and drama counterparts. And that is why there are more papers and dissertations on Ethiopian poetry in English relatively than its prose counterpart. For example, hereunder are sample lists of poetry in corpus, written during the advent of Ethiopian literature in English. To this effect, Tewodros (2002) analyzed the following listed poems of Ethiopia in English, and the lists are listed as they appear in Tewodros' paper.

Until this time there are eight Ethiopian poets who published their poems in books. These are G.E Gorfu's *Wildoats* (1974 E.C) and *Poems of Thought and Solitude* (1974 E.C). Assefa GMT's *The Voice* (1980 E.C), Hama Tuma's *Of Spades and Ethiopians* (1991), Lemleme Tesegaw, *Unheard Voices* (1994) and *A Mother's Eye View* (1997) Biruk Kebede's *The Son of Themba* (2001) and *Africa Distracted* by Daniel Legesse's (2001). Some other poems are issued in different anthologies of poetry like *Poems of Black Africa* (1975). In addition to this, Tsegaye's poems are published in *Afro-Asian poetry* (1971) and *African Assertion* (1976) (ibid: 16).

However, as slightly indicated in the background, if the Prose writings published hitherto is considered, there are very few texts. When Ethiopian literature in English came to the scene, only the works of Sahile Silassie's *Warrior King*, *Aferssata* and *Firebrands*, Abe Gubegna's *Defiance*, Dagnachew Worku's *The Thirteenth Sun*, Ashenafi Kebede's *Confession* have been

written. And prose writing in Ethiopian literature in English even today is relatively scarce when it is compared to its poetry counterpart. And the case is too scarce in drama too; only Abe Gubegna's play, *The Savage Girl* and Tsegaye Gebre Medhin's *Collision of Altars* could be mentioned.

The availability of Ethiopian novels in English compared to Ethiopian poems in English, to date is still scarcer than the available poems. Therefore, the logic seems that if there are no abundantly produced novels, there won't be many critiques and researches on the specified genre of literature, and that is why there are very few studies on the prose mainly Ethiopian novels in English.

In addition, Abeba (2002) deals with most known poets of Ethiopia. Her thesis and that of Tewodros' (2002) are different from the present study in focus, genre and framework of analysis. Tewodros' thesis is a kind of survey study and Abeba's is carried out through literary stylistics as an approach. The studies are similar to the present study only on focus, i.e. Ethiopian literature in English in broad sense. In other words, they share the present study on their point of discussion, being under the umbrella of Ethiopian literature in English.

Moreover, there are other literary studies on Ethiopian literature in English. Among these papers, one is by Nigistie (2016) with emphasis on the common diasporic sensibilities and literary elements across four Ethiopian diasporic narratives, *The Narratives Held at a Distance: My Rediscovery of Ethiopia*, *The Beautiful Things That Heaven Bears*, *Notes from the Hyena's Belly*, and *Beneath the Lion's Gaze*, which are written by Rebecca Haile, Dinaw Mengistu, Nega Mezlekia, and Maaza Mengiste respectively.

Nigistie's paper has concluded a conclusion that the novels share various characteristics in terms of setting, narration, voice, content, way of presentation, and theme commonalities. The study by Nigistie is different from the present study because the concern of her study is inclined to be diasporic issues on diasporic novels, and this is not the concern of the present study which focuses on only the interpretation of the different novels (even Rebecca's *Held at a Distance: My Rediscovery of Ethiopia* and Nega's *Notes from the Hyena's Belly* may not be taken under the category of novels as a genre, they are all about personal accounts (autobiography) of the respective writers), and these and the other two novels have not been used by the study mentioned above, on the basis of postmodern thoughts.



The same conclusion is also shared by Dereje (2012). This thesis has concluded “These Ethiopian-American female writers’ works exhibit common themes; nevertheless, the major concern of Maaza is occasionally being the minor concern of Rebecca. The converse is also true. This is evident in the literary works of these diasporic authors” (ibid. 2012: 6). This research which focuses on the commonality in the thematic areas of Ethiopian diasporic novels is different from the current study because the novels under the current study are not diasporic in their genre, and the tool of analysis also is different i.e. the present study which uses postmodern literary theory as tool of interpretation and analysis.

Similarly, Liknaw (2011) conducted a study not on a diasporic literature, but on Ethiopian novel in English. This study is only similar to the present study with the umbrella of Ethiopian novels in English with different point of discussion-the narratological aspect of literature more specifically on narrative voice/the covertness and overtness continuum of a narrator. It is different from the present study which focuses on the interpretation of Ethiopian novels in English from the basis of chief postmodern narrative strategies. The researcher in his former research has used *Defiance*, a novel by Abe Gubegna. And it is a different novel from the novels which are used as focus of analysis in the current study.

In addition, there is a postmodernist paper by Zewde (2017). As it has already been indicated in the statement part, this study has come with the conclusion that the chief postmodern themes, fabulation, parody, paranoia, intertextuality and fragmentation are common in the novel, ‘*Yeazo College*’, used in Zewde’s underdiscussion. The research by Zewde is different from the present study; for one thing, it is the study which focuses on a different novel, one Ethiopian novel in Amharic, while the current study is on Ethiopian novels in English. In addition, Zewde’s study is different from the present stud because, though they might be interrelated, much of the chief postmodern features that the current study uses in the theoretical framework, interrogation of reality, magical realism, rejection of high over low representation of culture, and other postmodern features are different from the main features taken as the interpretation and analysis framework of the study by Zewde. In simple terms, the theoretical framework that the previous study has used is different from the theoretical framework the current study uses.

Apart from local researchers on Ethiopian literature in English reviewed so far, the earliest in the study of Ethiopian literature has been attempted by Beer (1975). This paper is an anthology of

Ethiopian literature not dependent only on works written in English. It includes works of vernacular language (Amharic) annotated to English. Much of its attempt is on poems, and as it has been mentioned before, the much more inclination on poems might be so because of the less availability of other literary genres, novels, compared to poems, written in English in the time. Therefore, this study as an anthology has been carried out on collected genres of Ethiopian literature which differs from the present study because the focus area of the present study is only on selected Ethiopian novels in English.

A PhD paper which deals with postmodernist narrative strategies in the novels of John Fowles by an anonymous researcher (2003) and another paper which discusses the notion of self-reflexivity in postmodernist texts by Saracoglu (2003) are similar in the present paper which deals with “A Postmodernist Reading of Selected Ethiopian Novels in English” in using the very essence of postmodernism as windows of criticism. These theses are different from the present paper in relation to the texts or the study areas that the present study has used, Ethiopian Novels in English, which are different from the novels that the above papers by Saracoglu and the anonymous researcher have used. In addition, the way that postmodernism is used as a framework of analysis in the former papers including the organization of the papers is totally different from the way the current paper has used postmodernism. In other words, the theoretical framework what has been used in the current paper is different from the theoretical framework that the former papers used.

The other thesis by Martin (2013) deals with the aesthetic convergences progression in *Ulysses* and *Gravity's Rainbow* designed in relation to questionable progressions from modernism to postmodernism is similar with the current paper in relation to the utilization of some postmodernist notions. However, this paper is different from the current paper. The intention behind the paper by Martin is a discussion on the kind of oscillation or ambiguous progressions from modernism to postmodernism; while, the current paper is fully dependent of using postmodern notions as theoretical frameworks. The current paper uses modernism in only the conceptualization of postmodernism, for postmodernism is highly connected to modernism theory. In addition, the novels that Martin's thesis has used are different from the literary texts used in the current paper. The current paper is fully dependent only on some selected Ethiopian novels in English.

In addition, a review by Diwany et al. (2014) deals with a postmodernist reading of Kurt Vonnegut's *Slaughterhouse-Five* in line with the postmodernist' departure from modernists' philosophy, and it is different from the present paper in line with the intention of the present paper is not dedicated to show the departures of postmodernism from its modern counterpart. Though there may be cases in which postmodernism would be discussed and conceptualized in relation to modernism, the intention in the current study is preoccupied with reading Ethiopian novels in English from the vantage point of chief postmodern narrative strategies in focus. In other words, modernism in the current paper has no a place more than conceptualizing postmodernism.

Similar to the study by Diwany et al. Hooti and Shooshtarian (2014) deals with the practical analysis of Tom Stoppard's *Arcadia* in an oscillation form of postmodernism and modernism philosophical thoughts. Therefore, this study is different from the present study in relation to the idea that the current study is fully preoccupied with the detail reading of selected Ethiopian novels in English from the vantage point of chief postmodern narrative strategies. In other words, unlike the concern of Hooti and Shooshtarian, the intention of the current paper is not driven to deal with the oscillations of postmodern and modern philosophies.

Moreover, the paper by Sentove (2009) deals with the postmodernists' notion or perspective of time, and this paper is very important to add some sort of insights to deal the postmodernists' notion of historiographic metafiction in general and the postmodernists' notion of time in particular which are the concerns of the current paper too. However, the paper by Sentove is different from the current paper, for the paper by Sentove is restricted in only the postmodernists' notion of time. Coupled with time as one main issue of postmodernism, the current paper however deals with major postmodern narrative strategies as the whole. Plus, the texts used for the analysis purpose for Sentovs' paper are different from the texts used for the analysis and interpretation purpose in the current paper.

Furthermore, a study by Aboudaif (2012) deals with E.M. Fosters' novels, and this paper intends to find out the importance of aspects of the novel as a theory of postmodern fiction. It introduces a postmodern critical reading of the novel as a literary theory which is considered a revolution in fiction criticism during the 20th century, and this study is different from the present study. The

current study is carried out through the critical postmodern reading of selected Ethiopian novels in English, and it is different from Aboudaif's paper.

The brief review attempted so far, is related to works on Ethiopian literature in English in general and Ethiopian novels in English in particular. Some foreign studies designed from postmodern perspectives have also been reviewed. In other words, as much as possible, a review on Ethiopian literature in English and foreign studies from postmodern perspectives have been made.

The next reviews are mainly made on the reviews which focus on the novels under discussion, and this part is the main and more relevant part of the review of related studies of this study. As indicated in the statement of the study, one of the reasons which have triggered the researcher to conduct this study is the scarce research on the novels selected to this study in particular, and the absence of researches on Ethiopian literature in English from postmodern point of views in general. Thus, except *The Thirteenth Sun*, more works have not been conducted on the novels selected as primary sources of analysis. Thus, the following brief reviews are some of the fewer works made on these novels in point.

A dissertation by Yideg (2009) made on *Things Fall Apart* and *Land of the Yellow Bull* is one of the studies, and this study is different from the present study. For one thing, the aforementioned research has been conducted upon one different novel- a Nigerian novel-*Things Fall Apart* is not the sample novel selected for the current study, though one of the novels, *Land of the Yellow Bull*, is the concern in this study too. The study by Yideg has been carried out from the narrative technique, narratological perspectives more specifically in relation to narrative voice and focalization in focus. However, the present study, which focuses on the analysis and interpretation of the novel, *Land of the Yellow Bull*, along with other selected novels in relation to postmodern narrative strategies, has been designed from postmodern view point.

In addition, 'Mind Style as a Means of Characterization' is a paper by Mintesnot (2011) on the aforementioned novel, *Land of the Yellow Bull*, and this study is also different from the current study in focus. Therefore, the paper is similar to the present dissertation only in its use of similar novel, *Land of the Yellow Bull*, for the interpretation and analysis purposes of both the papers- the present and Mintesnot's paper.

Furthermore, Sharma (2012) has used *Land of the Yellow Bull* as one of the novels for discussion. This paper is also different from the current study in its exploration of the universal aspects of Ethiopian fictions. To this effect, the paper tries to deal with love as one of the universal themes. In other words, the paper deals with love as a universal theme reflected in *Land of the Yellow Bull*. This is different from the present study which focuses on interpreting the novel under discussion from postmodern aspects, more specifically reading this novel along with other selected novels from the vantage point of postmodern narrative strategies.

Debebe (1994) deals with the novel, *The Thirteenth Sun*, mainly in relation to the symbolic representation of the major characters such as Fitawrari Woldu as a representative of the feudal system; Goytom (the son of the Fitawrari) to the new generation especially as representative of the educated ones; the Conjured-woman is taken to be the representative agent of the Ethiopian Orthodox Tewahido Church believers whose religious and cultural view is intermingled with no clear demarcation between their religion and culture; the peasant (the husband of the Conjured-woman) is also taken as the representative of the mass or the people in the lower class; and lastly Woynitu (the illegitimate daughter of Fitawrari Woldu and half sister of Goytom) is taken as a symbolic representative of the country-Ethiopia.

The above symbolic representation of the characters involved in the novel is also strongly discussed by Teklu (1983). After similarly representing the characters as described above, Teklu considers the whole novel as a symbolic representation of Ethiopia's problem in the imperial regime, and he strengthens the ironical narrative revealed in the novel by taking the title of the novel, *The Thirteenth Sun*, conversely as "Thirteen Months of Darkness". Teklu made this converse representation from "Thirteen Months of Sunshine", the Ethiopia's age-old cause of pride and tourism motto. This is the idea firmly addressed with the scholar under discussion.

Having the above major characters as symbolic representatives, the whole analysis in Debebe's article is cumulatively driven to show the clash or the conflict among the above sectors/structures of the society to make some sort of revolution upon the old structured feudal system of the then Ethiopia. Therefore, this article is different from the current study which is mainly designed to study the novel, *The Thirteenth Sun*, along with other selected novels from the vantage point of postmodern narrative strategies.

Not very different in essence from Debebe's article is an essay by Taye (1994), made upon the same novel in relation to imagery and symbolism in the way that can lead us to the possible meanings and themes expected to be revealed. It is a good job, for it shows how the very fundamental concept that meaning and form are inseparable in literary texts. What is made on the form of a certain text is all about the theme of the text and the vice-versa. This critique made in showing how imagery made through descriptions and symbols to get the possible themes is different from the current study which deals with the discussion of the aforementioned novel together with other selected novels from postmodern narrative strategies.

Though they do not overtly relate their discussion to the notion of postmodernism, covertly, the discussions made by both Debebe and Taye may take a share with the current study in relation to fragmentation which is one of the major postmodern narrative strategies. Except this aspect of postmodernism, everything what is going to be made on the novel, *The Thirteenth Sun*, in this study, is different from the discussions in the two previously acknowledged papers.

In addition to the above paper, Taye (2000) deals with a paper which states the narrative architecture of *The Thirteenth Sun* is very important in this review, and this paper deals with the narrative structure, or the form aspect of the novel under discussion in the way this structural analysis leads us to the content and themes of the novel. This is made in relation to motifs, symbols and other implications treated in the novel under discussion, and it is indicated in the extract below as follows:

From the foregoing discussion, it can be gathered that *The Thirteenth Sun* is rich in motifs and symbolisms. The various motifs and symbols are the building-blocks that give structural unity to the themes and images of the novel. To date, no other Ethiopian novelist has used motifs with such intensity for both creating anticipatory effects on the reader and generating a unified image of a decadent society (Taye, 2000:44).

Therefore, the paper by Taye as acknowledged above is preoccupied with mere discussions on the narrative structure of the novel through motifs and symbols. Therefore, this is the paper different from the current paper, for the current paper deals with the narrative strategy of the novel driven from the chief postmodern view points.

A paper by Moges (2010) deals with the analysis of major stylistic features in *The Thirteenth Sun*, and his article, “Deviation as a Stylistic Feature in The Thirteenth Sun”, designed from his paper may be similar to the current study in discussing some defamiliarized or deviated narratives treated in the novel. However, the intention of the paper by Moges is inclined to discuss deviation in the novel from the very nature of stylistics. In other words, the aim of Moges’ paper is to analyze deviation as a stylistic feature in Dagnachew Worku’s, *The Thirteenth Sun*; whereas, the intention behind the current study is related to the discussion of the notion of deviation as one component of magical realism under the big notion of postmodern narrative strategy in the novel under discussion.

Therefore, these two studies (the study by Moges and the current study) may intersect only in using the term, deviation. Except using the term, deviation, the papers are totally different. As it is indicated above, though the notion of deviation is discussed in both the papers (the paper by Moges and the current paper), the notion in Moges’ paper is dealt from stylistics aspect, but the issue in the current paper is dealt in relation to defamiliarization as one of the basic elements of magical realism from postmodern viewpoints.

In addition, Teklu (1983) made on Dagnachew’s works comprehensively, mainly focusing on the thematic aspects that *The Thirteenth Sun* and other works of Dagnachew portray, and this is a paper, different from the current paper. As it has been indicated previously, though theme and form are the inseparable aspects of texts, the intention in the current paper is totally preoccupied with the discussion of *The Thirteenth Sun* from the vantage point of postmodern narrative strategies which could be more of technical-form oriented. In other words, in the current study, only the thematic aspects which could be important to the discussion of postmodern narrative strategies as forms are discussed. However, in the paper by Teklu, the whole discussion is fully dependent on the thematic aspects that the whole part of the novel cumulatively reveals.

So far, the reviews related to the previous studies have been made. Similar to studies reviewed so far, the next chapter deals with conceptual frameworks related to postmodernism as a tool of analysis.

## **Chapter Three: Conceptual Framework**

### **3.1. Introduction**

This chapter deals with conceptual descriptions and explanations on the various issues related to the tool of analysis of this study-postmodernism. Therefore, ideas like, the very essence of postmodernism as an approach under the notion of literary theory, the relationships of postmodernism with other literary theories by giving special emphasis to modernism and poststructuralism, postmodernism and globalization, postmodernism and enlightenment and the basic theoretical medals are discussed.

### **3.2. Modernism as a Foundation of Postmodernism**

This section deals with the scholars' ideas regarding modernism as a foundation to postmodernism. Because these two windows of criticism as their namings, modernism and postmodernism imply, have a strong linkage both in the difference and resemblance aspects. "Arguments widely associated with postmodernism, and the opposing arguments thus necessarily associated with modernism (though note that some postmodernists reject this sort of oppositional strategy as inherent in modernism), and see themselves as rejecting direct contradictions" (Szostak, 2007: 33).

Thus, it seems that scholars are arguing whether postmodernism is an opposite, or similar philosophy, to modernism. From this, it is possible to say these two philosophical concepts are related to each other at least in the notion that postmodernism is termed after the term, modernism. Postmodernism couldn't come from nothing, and paradoxically, though it dismantles some sort of fixation and reality which are issues, advocated by modernism, postmodernism needs something to come into existence. As its typical feature, postmodernism aspires intertextuality, and as it is mentioned above, stylistically, it is from modernism that postmodernism is originated (Hutcheon 2013). It could be sound to say that it is impossible to conceptualize postmodernism without associating it with modernism. Though these schools of thought have things in common as indicated above, scholars mostly focus on the differences between them.

In short, post modernist literary theory is a theory mainly designed by advocates to show the imbalance between the theoretical assumptions that modernism has promised and the opposing



practical happening of these theoretically promised happenings. Thus it seems true that though relations between modernism and postmodernism are not distinctively clear, some consider postmodernism as a reactionary theory against modernism, and the others consider it as an advanced form of modernism. Regardless of the different assumptions of scholars on postmodernism, it is after the inauguration of modernism that a room to say postmodernism is an aspect of this and that literary theory is possible. As postmodernism has a connection to modernism, the next part deals with the concept of postmodernism in relation to other literary theories too.

### **3.3. The Concept of Postmodernism**

Let alone this broad concept postmodernism, it is challenging to define even every simple term that individuals are acquainted with in the day-to-day engagements. This is so because of various reasons related to the very broad and complex nature of postmodernism. People can use postmodernism in a wider range and disciplines in a modified version. In other words, postmodernism is a concept which people could use in various contexts. The following view reinforces.

Postmodernism is a hot topic in a wide variety of disciplines or areas of study, including art, architecture, music, film, literature, sociology, communications, fashion, and technology. Although a conceptual term is expected to have a clear -cut definition that defines its connotation and extension, it is hardly so in the area of social sciences and humanities. The reasons are as follows: first of all, concepts in social science and humanities are relative, because unlike a concept in physical science that has an objective signified, the signified of a concept in social science and humanities is usually an idea that is scarcely definable; secondly, since there are differences in their comprehension of the same concept, people constantly revise or redefine the concept only to enlarge its connotation rather than making it clearer and more exact (Ma, 2013: 1).

“Any reference to the term ‘postmodernism’ immediately exposes one to the risk of being accused of jumping on a bandwagon, of perpetuating a rather shallow and meaningless intellectual fad. One of the problems is that the term is at once fashionable yet irritatingly elusive to define” (Featherstone, 2007: 1). Various scholars define postmodernism differently. For example, Bennett and Royle (2004: 261) on postmodernism:

Indeed, postmodern appears to welcome and embrace a thinking of itself in terms of multiplicity. It resists the totalizing gesture of a metalanguage, the attempt to describe it as a set of coherent explanatory theories. Rather than trying to explain it in terms of a fixed philosophical position or as a kind of knowledge, we shall instead present a 'postmodern vocabulary' in order to suggest its mobile, fragmented and paradoxical nature.

In the quote above, it is understood that postmodernism is a philosophy which has come to celebrate the multiplicity and more interpretive nature of a certain narrative than associating this narrative to a certain inappropriate fixation. Different implications can result from one representation than associating it with one strict fixation which does not come to reality in normal circumstances where our entire world is full of different philosophical insights. In addition, Selden et al. (2005) strengthen the destruction of totalizing the different views. Postmodernism, according to Selden and et al. (2005) is defined as a thought which came to accommodate the various dynamic differences resulting from the advanced technological changes of the world which the modernist philosophy couldn't provide in the way that can fit to the entire world. In other words, the material mentioned above states the idea that postmodernism has been originated from modernism where modernist thinking could not accommodate the entire globe resulted from advanced science and technology. As per the notion of postmodernism, the advancement of technology leads the experiences of mankind beyond what individuals expect them to be, and it is different in the variation of cultural settings across the entire globe. The knowledge in cultural aspects in particular and in social sciences are mostly fluid which science and technology may not easily accommodate. A certain thinking which could be appropriate to a certain setting may not be appropriate to the different contexts of the entire world. The quote below explains this point of discussion.

Where the project of modernity is defended (with or without an accompanying defence of artistic modernism), this is in the face of the leading contentions of postmodernism: first, that the 'grand narratives' of social and intellectual progress initiated by the enlightenment are discredited; and second, that any political grounding of these ideas in 'history' or 'reality' is no longer possible, since both have become 'textualized' in the world of images and simulations which characterize the contemporary age of mass consumption and advanced technologies (Selden et al. 2005:197).

Also, Selden et al. (2005), state the fear that postmodernism compared to modernism itself has questions that it does not fully address. “As opposed to modernist experimentation, postmodernists produce ‘open, discontinuous, improvisational, indeterminate, or aleatory structures.’” They also reject the traditional aesthetics of ‘Beauty’ and of ‘uniqueness’” (ibid: 199). However, this fear may be reduced into the assumption, meaning and interpretation of artistic works do not have one universally accepted ending so that one can enjoy art whatever hermeneutic ending the text will earn to the reader. The interpreter will produce any textual meaning from the artistic works that he/she is dealing with. This is true as long as interpretation is reasonably justified in its pragmatics where the reading discourse is situated.

Bertens (2002:138) as a way of presenting story which has been introduced in the 1950s and onwards gives liberty to the writers in the way which deviates from the normal traditions of narrative presentation. “In the 1960s and 1970s the most realistic fiction of the 1950s begins to give way to a sort of writing that takes extraordinary liberties with the traditions of fiction.” postmodernism is a philosophy which gives literary license to the writers to write texts in the way they like than being tightened with the most previous canonic traditions. This is the idea related to maximalism and deviation which are going to be discussed in detail in the theoretical framework of this paper since they are the chief features of postmodern texts.

In short, as has been indicated so far, postmodernism is not a term which can be put in one universally accepted definition. Some take postmodernism as a reactionary philosophy to modernism; still, others take it as an extension or advanced form of modernism. Hence, postmodernism can be considered a recently inaugurated philosophy in various disciplines after World War II, to revisit some of the previous assumptions of modernism and other literary theories so that it has its own linkage chiefly with modern and poststructural thinkings.

So, running definition to definition of different scholars that have attempted to define postmodernism might not be important; rather, what may be important here is understanding postmodernism in relation to other literary theories. Though modernist literary theory takes the lion share and it is used for the foundation to postmodernist literary theory, other literary theories like, poststructuralism, feminism, and others have relations with this theory-postmodernism. Thus, regardless the differences that postmodernist theory differs from other literary theories, it could easily be understood when we consider it in relation to other literary theories, for it has a

strong linkage with other literary theories. The following extract may support this point of argument.

Like other categorical terms-say poststructuralism, or modernism, or romanticism for that matter-postmodernism suffers from a certain semantic instability: that is, no clear consensus about its meaning exists among scholars. The general difficulty is compounded in this case by two factors: (a) the relative youth, indeed brash adolescence, of the term postmodernism, and (b) its semantic kinship to more current terms, themselves equally unstable. Thus some critics mean by postmodernism what others call avant-gardism or even neo-avant-gardism, while still others would call the same phenomenon simply modernism. This can make inspired debates (Hassan, 1987: 3).

In addition, intertextuality is one of the postmodern features, and it is used to mean nothing is original so that something could not stand alone. In other words, Postmodernism could not claim a question of originality upon something. Thus, it may be because of its feature of intertextuality, postmodernism is a literary theory that could easily be investigated in relation to other literary theories. In other words, studying postmodernism is a task which could seek researchers with a relative deep understanding of other different literary theories.

Postmodernism as it has been indicated earlier, has a linkage with other theories, researchers on postmodernism have a chance of getting exposure on other literary theories. Thus, the researcher of the present study has had the desire of using postmodernism as the framework of analysis because the nature of postmodernism enables him to discuss Ethiopian literature and to have the opportunities which would expose him to the scrutiny of other literary theories while he is dealing issues with postmodern theory. It is because of this reason that the next consecutive pages will provide a brief discussion of postmodernism vis-à-vis other literary theories.

### **3.4. Postmodernism and Poststructuralism**

Postmodernism and poststructuralism are related at least in the assumption that some sorts of reconsiderations have to be made on some totalitarian assumptions is their common agendum. These two theories are originated from other literary theories; postructuralism is originated from structuralism; whereas, postmodernism is originated from modernism. Therefore, these theories have things in common in relation to at least these theories have been emerged from other

literary theories. It is argued that poststructuralism has played a great role in the foundation of postmodernism.

The foundation of postmodernism must be sought in post-structuralism; this is because post-structuralism with well grounded and defined principles that reflect objectivity and totality presented a viable and more credible way of approach. Instead of concepts like: homogeneity, universalism, comprehensiveness, globalism and universalization, poststructuralism emphasizes on subjects like pluralism, multiplicity, particularities, diffuseness, disintegration and individuality of concepts (Moghaddam et al. 2012: 2).

The quote implies both postmodernism and poststructuralism have narrative features that reject the universal mode of evaluation that the entire world has attempted to use as canons of the world. This is made for the assumption that totalitarian thinking could not be materialized in practice, for postmodernism and post structuralism advocate ideas like pluralism, multiplicity, particularities, diffuseness, and disintegration and individuality of concepts. Poststructuralism is related to postmodernism in its sense how modernity under the notion of modernist theory is understood:

Poststructuralism should be distinguished from deconstruction, and represents the penultimate stage of modernity. It is the stage where we began to focus on the ambiguity in meaning as the central location at the edge of critical reason that helps identify ethical choice. Derridean construction, I would argue, comes after poststructuralism and represents the last stage of modernity: no longer willing to offer thick descriptions of how we come to take our leaps of faith, deconstruction focuses only on the ethical choice itself. What comes after deconstruction? Perhaps the absolute acknowledgment of the limits of critical reason and the refusal to take any leap of faith at all; perhaps a turn, instead, to randomization (Harcourt (2007:23).

The ideas like the rejection of reason as the main issue in identification of meaning / ambiguity in meaning as the central location at the edge of critical reason... and the issue of randomization/fragmentation makes poststructuralism similar to postmodernism. In addition, it is possible to infer Bertens (2002: 141-142) in order to understand both the similarities and differences of postmodernism and poststructuralism. The following quote shows relationship between postmodernism and deconstructionism.

It can hardly be coincidental that the advent of postmodernism roughly coincides with that of poststructuralism. Although it would be stretching things to say that postmodernism is a sort of applied poststructuralism, poststructuralist ideas put into practice by writers – there is a good deal of overlap between the interests of postmodern writers and those of poststructuralist critics. Postmodernism, however, is more than a specific literary mode. Rather confusingly, it is also the name of a form of literary criticism that is broadly poststructuralist in its assumptions. The perspective of postmodern criticism on language, on identity, on ‘truth’, and so on, is strongly influenced by Derrida’s deconstructionist philosophy, but it tends to be less technical than deconstruction.

Though postmodernism is conterminous with poststructuralism, it is broader in its senses and is influenced by deconstructionism. Bertens (2002) further states the relationship between postmodernism and deconstruction:

Although obviously related to deconstruction, postmodern criticism usually casts its net a good deal wider. Just like the new criticism, deconstruction tends to focus on the ‘words on the page’, bringing to light the ‘warring forces’ that operate within a text. Postmodernist criticism shares that interest – although inconsiderably less detail – but is also interested in connecting what it finds in the texts it reads with social reality (ibid: 142).

In its integrating feature of the issue treated in the actual text with the social reality out of the text, postmodernism is beyond deconstruction. When the textual evidences invite, postmodernist way of reading contextualizes issues with the writer (author’s biography), setting (when and where the literary text is produced), to whom the literary text is produced (from the audience’s perspective) and etc. To put the idea of the above quotes in a nutshell, it could be understood that postmodernism apart from various similarities with poststructuralism and deconstructionism, is wider than that of poststructuralism. The more emphasis in poststructuralism is on the separation of language from reality on the restructure of language. However, postmodernism ontologically gives emphasis on the separation of every aspect of life from reality constructed by the modernist thought. In addition, postmodernism is different from deconstructionist thought, for postmodernism integrates or includes the social realities beyond text which deconstructionist’

interpretation of literary texts could not do. Deconstructionist interpretation on texts is fully dependent of the texts. Similar to the way that discussion has been made upon the relationship between postmodernism and poststructuralism, the next section deals with the relationship between postmodernism and feminist literary theories.

### **3.5. Postmodernism and Feminism**

Postmodernist and feminist literary theories have relationships, for both theories are designed on narratives which focus to restructure the wrongly constructed realities. This is related to the ideas which have been made about women in feminism and all the marginalized societies at large in postmodernism. According to Glover and Kplan (2009), feminism has come to liberate females (women) from the stories, traditions and total practices experienced in a certain country in particular and the globe in general.

It has been known that the discrimination of women has been deep rooted in one's economic, political, social and religious affairs cumulatively in one's cultural practices across the globe. The same is true for workers or the lower class in the case of Marxism. In Marxist literary theory, literature is considered on the basis of narratives from the lower class vantage points. Similarly, feminist ideology would enable individuals to consider literature from the thinking that leads to the world as a harsh and alien landscape to women:

Men and women are, of course, different. But, they are not as different as day and night, life and death. Infact, from the stand point of nature, men and women are closer to each other than either is to anything else, for example, than mountains, kangaroos, or coconut palms, The idea that men and women are more different from one another than either is from anything else must come from somewhere other than nature (Rubin, 1975: 179-80, quoted in Glover and Kplan, 2009: 16).

It is possible to state that the ideas of feminism are supported and advanced by the ideas of postmodernism. Postmodernism is primarily designed to interrogate this and other similar wrong cultural constructions of some part of the highest part of the world society as these wrong constructions in most cases are indoctrinated as 'real' part of the society; while, they are actually not real. Surprisingly, there are theories where postmodernism is used as a signifier for various

like postmodern feminism, postmodern psychoanalysis, and etc. in turn, it may show us the strong intersection between postmodernism with feminism and other literary theories:

The intersections and conflicts between "feminism" and "postmodernism" to phrase it more precisely, two crucial aspects in the approaches of Jean-François Lyotard, i.e. first, his handling of "philosophy" and its implications for social criticism and second, his conceptualization of the social and the subject with its implications for the core category of feminist theorizations, "woman," will be presented and discussed in the light of the project of a "postmodernist feminism" as advanced by the American feminist theorists Nancy Fraser and Linda Nicholson (Pegelow, 1997: 2).

From the quote above, it is known that the linkage between postmodernism and feminism literary theories led even to the extent of having a project resulted from a mixture of these two literary theories (postmodernist feminism). This is similar to for postmodernist psychology and others. Hutcheon (1988) expresses the relationship of postmodernism and feminism overlapped with postmodern concern for exposing the relationships between meanings produced at the level of culture in meanings produced in social formation. In other words, feminism and postmodernism have taught individuals in a way how they make sense of our culture. On the contrary, there are other scholars who do not consider relationships of these two schools from positive side.

Postmodern theory disadvantages the field of women's history in three ways. First, it is hostile to the basic concept of linear time and of cause and effect assumptions which most professionally trained historians continue to honor in their teaching and writings. Second, postmodern theory's misogynist and very specific historical origins among post-World War II Parisian intellectuals—from Lévi-Strauss and Lacan to Foucault and Derrida require excessive intellectual modification and machinations to include women. Finally, it is politically paralyzing (Hoff, 1994: 151).

Hoff suggests the argument for history in the quote is perceived as a chronological happening of events, and postmodernism does not give emphasis to the time of events for postmodernism does not care for time sequences as past, present and future so that postmodernism may be unfriendly to treat sequential happening of feminist realities. However, this fear may be reduced by considering the issue that postmodernism is not dealing with narratives which focus on the total dismantling or total restructure of the previous happening of realities. However, postmodernism



interrogates and devalues the previous pseudo realities-not the realities that history recorded and recounted as tangible or factual experiences. In this case, reality would be free from any postmodernist interrogation.

### **3.6. Postmodernism and Globalization**

Globalization as to Moghaddam et al. (2012), is any attempt of people to share or to be informed on all the experiences of the world together, is not a recent phenomenon of the world. Though the degree varies as a result of the help of advanced technology and science to the practice of globalization, the essence and practice of globalization was there in those remote, long distant periods of history. People had tried to exchange ideas, money, and other mode of influence (trying to influence others and be influenced by others) across the globe from the very beginning of their awareness about the existence of life and experience beyond the horizon of their village, province cumulatively beyond the horizon of their sovereign state. Globalization is the big issue of the past and prevailing probably future experiences. For example, Moghaddam et al. (2012:5) indicate the actual practice of globalization and its relation to modernism and postmodernism so that one's understanding of globalization may enable him/her to practice it properly in the postmodern period where globalization is coming to be a must in different daily activities:

Among the important factors that have a profound effect on social changes, are new issues which are related to globalization, modernism and postmodernism, and so a uniquely modern and different set of operative conditions inevitably seem to prevail. Globalization should consider two views of classic scientists and contemporary thinkers. The difference between these two views is that the classic scientists talked about on the cultural and sociological views whereas, contemporary scientists emphasized on economic and political aspects of the globalization phenomenon (ibid).

Though the kind of relationship between postmodernism and globalization is not exactly known earlier, and whatever inclination globalization has had with the different periods as time has gone on, at least it could be understood that globalization was there in the past to the present. Thus, considerations how globalization is made to be used in our life without its adverse effect in the contemporary world of postmodernism-conscious advanced form of modernism should be paid. There may be cases in which globalization may be taken into the industrialized nations' new mode of neocolonialism. The following quote may elaborate how postmodernism could be

important to enlighten people with their understanding on the negative effects of globalization. Unless it or globalization is scrutinized through postmodernism as a lens, it may negatively affect life. Hereunder is the extensive quote which could better describe the case in point.

Indeed, globalization is one of the most hotly debated issues of the present era. For some, it is a cover concept for global capitalism and imperialism and is accordingly condemned as another form of the imposition of the logic of capital and the market on ever more regions of the world and spheres of life. For others, it is the continuation of modernization and a force of progress, increased wealth, freedom, democracy, and happiness. Its defenders present globalization as beneficial, generating fresh economic opportunities, political democratization, cultural diversity, and the opening to an exciting new world. Its critics see globalization as harmful, bringing about increased domination and control by the wealthier overdeveloped nations over the poor underdeveloped countries, thus increasing the hegemony of the "haves" over the "have-nots." In addition, supplementing the negative view, globalization critics assert that globalization produces an undermining of democracy, a cultural homogenization, and increased destruction of natural species and the environment (Kellner, 2009: 3).

In addition, postmodernism and globalization are intersected in their aspiration of developed science and technology. Postmodernism is believed to exist as a result of the fast development of science and technology that the development of man's rational development of the modern period could not accommodate. Globalization is practised through internet and advanced computerized technology (Kellner, 2009; Baudrillard, 1993; Bell, 1976). Globalization is a concept that should be discussed under the notion of postmodern narratives for it has ideas that postmodernism shares advanced science and technology. The knowledge of postmodernism is important in reducing the influences that economically developed countries especially the westerns load their cultural and philosophical elements upon the developing countries as if it were the way of life which must be shared by less developed countries at the expense of their native mode of life and philosophy. Hence, under the notion of postmodern narratives as it is indicated in the previous concepts, dealing with globalization, is important for people so that they can easily use it contextually.

So far, postmodernism has been discussed as an inclusive contemporary philosophy which includes architecture, literature, photography, film, painting, video, dance, music, and some other disciplines (Hutcheon, 2002; Jameson, 1992; Lyotard, 1984; Lacan, 1977; Nicol. 2009; Han and Wang, 2014; Selden et al. 2005; Bennett and Royle, 2004). Therefore, postmodernism is a very huge concept which is not an end approach by itself. What is important here in using postmodernism as an approach to literary interpretation is approaching it operationally. Hence, the next part of the paper deals with the theoretical models designed in relation to basic postmodern narrative strategies applied for this dissertation.

### **3.7. Theoretical Models**

This section discusses chief postmodern narrative strategies which could be used as frameworks of analysis and interpretations. It is with the discussion of these chief postmodern narrative strategies that the theoretical framework used as a tool of analysis is elaborated. Some theoretical frameworks used in the interpretation of the novels will be addressed on the basis of postmodern narrative strategies, and the following features are the major postmodern narrative strategies reflected in postmodern texts. So, the following section deals with brief clarifications on each postmodern narrative strategy. The first basic strategy is magical realism.

#### **3.7.1. Magical Realism**

Magical realism, according to Geetha (2010), is the technique, composed in oxymoron forms, with the utilization of two unrelated terms- 'magic' and 'realism'. Writers use it to include the mythical beliefs, supernatural elements and dreamlike elements in the way which does not reject the representative feature of literature to life. In other words, magical realism is a technique in which fantastic features are used without the rejection of reality effect of the literary product.

The term "magic realism" is an oxymoron, one that suggests a binary opposition between the representational code of realism and that, roughly, of fantasy. In the language of narration in a magic realist text, a battle between two oppositional systems takes place, each working toward the creation of a different kind of fictional world from the other (Slemon, 1988:10-11).

If something is magical, how could it be real? Magic is something in relation to fantasy; while, reality is something related to objective point of view. It is why in most cases ‘magical realism’ is going to be investigated in relation to ‘reality effect’ of literature. As it is known, reality effect is a form of suspension of disbelief in which qualities of a certain narration where readers take literary texts were the imaginative representation of real life experiences.

The novelists we identify as realists may or may not be selective in subject matter although most of them prefer the common place and the everyday, represented in minute detail, over rarer aspects of life but they must render their materials in ways that make them seem to their readers the very stuff of ordinary experience better (Abrams, 1999:260-61).

Here, there are different literary movements of writing as romanticism, realism, naturalism, etc. However, all the different genres of writing should win their readers in the way the readers can experience the story as if it were the incident that people can experience in their real life engagements. Literature is required as a work of art in which human experience is made for human feeling. In other words, it is believed that a literary product can be taken as a real life experience of people according to the verisimilitude of the produced literary product.

In addition, reality effect is related to the essence of literature in its acceptance. Literature has come to be a reflection of human concerns which could be experienced in their actual life engagements. Literature is therefore understood as a representative of life through a relatively better understanding of ‘magical realism’, coupled with ‘reality effect’. ‘Magical realism’ is a concept which the writers use to include some fantastic events and incidents in their narratives. This is made as our day- to-day normal engagements without the rejection of plausibility of their story in the literary world they appear. It is one area of discussion under the big notion of postmodern thought.

As Sharma and Chaudhary (2011) state the concept of magical realism is related to the presentation of irony, and defamiliarized presentation of discourses. In other words, irony and defamiliarization are among the elements of magical realism. According to Abrams (1999), irony is a figure of speech in which words are used in such a way that their intended meaning is different from the actual meaning of the words. Irony may also be a situation that ends up in quite different way than what is generally anticipated. In simple words, it is a difference between

the appearance and the reality. Irony as literary device is the literary technique which helps to show the gap or the difference between the expectations and their respective results. Basically, as it is known, there are three types of ironies, namely verbal, situational and dramatic.

Situational irony is an irony experienced in a situation where the practical happening of things based on a certain situation is opposite from the expected happening of things. For example, we may experience one's failure in examination after a great deal of reading and preparation to succeed in the exam.

The second category of irony is verbal, and this irony is an irony in which we can come across the discrepancy between what a certain character acts overtly and what he/she internally believes. For example, it is a situation where a cruel character acts as if he/she were kind; the clever one pretends as a lazy and so on.

The last type of irony is dramatic irony, and it is an irony in which the audiences are informed about something of the characters while the characters are not clear with the issue. It is the gap between the character of the story and the reader of the same story about what is going on the characters.

In short, irony is the dominantly experienced feature of postmodern fictions, for postmodern fictions are full of discrepancies, uncertainties, confusions and fragmented or disordered settings of the world. "Though the idea of employing irony in literature did not start with the postmodernists (the modernists were often playful and ironic), it became a central feature in many postmodern works" (Sharma and Chaudhary 2011:193). Sharma and Chaudhary (2011) further expresses irony is mostly achieved in the form of playfulness and black humor. That is why postmodern writers in previous times are considered as black humorist. Black humorists are writers who treat the miserable actions in easier and euphemism presentation full of fantastic funs.

The second notion that should be made clear in relation to magical realism is the concept related to the incorporation of defamiliarized ways of presentation. Habib (2005) and other scholars agree with the idea of 'defamiliarization' as introduced by Russian formalist, Victor Shklovsky. As is indicated in his article, *Art As Technique* (1917), defamiliarization is a technique of

narration provided in the way where the familiar narrative is presented as if it were unfamiliar. It is all about making deautomatization.

As is mentioned in Habib (2005), defamiliarization is the way of describing situations from an unusual point of view. It is because of this concept that defamiliarization is related to magical realism. Magical realism has been explained so far as it is the way of presenting narratives in usual way with no rejection of realities in which the narrated element is to be there.

Both defamiliarization and magical realism first create a question in our mind since narration is made in a different way from the narration we are mostly acquainted with. However, it will later be adjusted that the cases may have possibilities to be experienced. This is the feature of magical realism, for magical realism in the sense of postmodernism is a technique of narration in which some unexpected narrations are made as if they were normal and one's day-to-day activities.

In relation to magical realism, Jacques Lacan's (1977), *The Mirror Stage* could be used as a theoretical framework. Lacan has discussed the issue of how an infant can sense things through his/her own external image shown through the mirror. Here, the infant begins to develop a sense of "I" in relation to the external image that he/she can see through the mirror. As the famous Marxist, Luis Althusser has extended Lacan's theory into the individual's reaction in relation to others in the society in which an individual lives with; Lacan's theory is not restricted to only the infant's development. Thus, Lacan's theory of the mirror stage can impliedly be adapted to the discussion and analysis of the concepts related to magical realism.

In general, magical realism refers to a postmodern feature in which unreal ideas are treated as if they were normal, and as if they were part and parcel of the day-to-day engagements. It is all about the ironical narratives in texts. In turn, this is similar with Lacan's idea of 'the mirror stage'. Here, the infant recognizes the image as if his/her real representative; while, the picture is actually the replica of the infant. The next section deals with another basic feature of postmodern narrative strategy, fragmentation.

### **3.7.2. Fragmentation**

According to Sharma and Chaudhary (2011), fragmentation is a postmodern narrative feature. It is used for referring the ideas, like distortions and uncertainties of narratives resulting from the rejection of the formerly established grand narratives. They further consider fragmentation as:

“Fragmentation and non-linear narratives are central features in both modern and postmodern literature. Temporal distortion in postmodern fiction is used in a variety of ways, often for the sake of irony (ibid, 8).” It is through the eyes of postmodernism in which uncertain, fragmented and distorted narrations are uncovered. Rezaei (2017) describes the range of fragmentation in postmodern thought.

Nothing is certain: we cannot be certain about anything... Fragmentation is an on-going process. In post-modernism, this is reflected in the breaking of forms, use of montage and collage and mixing of genres in an unexpected manner. Since post-modern culture is essentially mass culture, all canons are discredited. The traditional values are flouted; the culture is de- canonized... (ibid: 16).

Fragmentation in postmodernism is seen in many aspects of discourse in which a certain narrative is situated. Together with fragmentation, we may raise the notion of detective narrative, another demanding feature of postmodernism. Detective narrative is a genre in literature which mostly goes through the process of serious inspections or investigation for a solution of some sort of hidden issues. Narratives in this category are mostly presented in fragmented and puzzle actions like, issues on criminality. In addition, it goes to the extent of narratives related to search the lost thing, one’s identity, etc. Thus, detective story is one of the chief characteristics of postmodern texts. By being part of the solution which leads the reader to develop a skill of critical thinking, detection gives readers a chance to do mental gyms.

Postmodern fictions are known in giving freedom for readers in two ways. One, as intertextuality is one basic feature of postmodernism, detective narration gives freedom to a reader when the narratives are made in an open ended manner where the audiences can suggest the next plot line of the story. As is mentioned above, the second situation where postmodern texts give freedom to readers is related to detective stories. So, excluding rare cases where maximalism is used, in postmodern texts the overt nature of the narrator is minimal. In other words, authorial involvement is minimal in postmodern fictions. Postmodern narratives give chance to readers to be part of the narrative process. The next section deals with metafiction as one typical feature of postmodern narratives.

### 3.7.3. Metafiction

Metafiction is a postmodern narrative strategy in which readers are coming to be aware of the fictitious feature of the story they are reading. The readers feel that they are being told a certain story than experiencing the story as a real life experience of human beings. This is to mean readers are informed about the fabricated narratives about the stories they are reading.

Metafiction is essentially writing about writing or "foregrounding the apparatus", making the artificiality of art or the fictionality of fiction apparent to the reader and generally disregards the necessity for "willful suspension of disbelief". It is often employed to undermine the authority of the author, for unexpected narrative shifts, to advance a story in a unique way, for emotional distance, or to comment on the act of storytelling (Sharma and Chaudhary, 2011: 195).

Under magical realism, suspension of disbelief is a concept which tells us the writers' skill of creating reality effect in which readers of the story can sense the story as if what they are reading is a real life experience. However, when the story is organized in metafiction as a feature of the story, readers feel that they are reading a fictitious fiction which informs that the fiction what readers are reading is a fiction not a real life experience. So, these contradictory features, metafiction and magical realism of postmodern fiction may technically indicate the uncertain feature of reality as it is advocated in postmodernism. In other words, informing about the fake behind the narratives may stylistically relate the typical postmodern feature of uncertainty and fragmented narratives of postmodernism.

In relation to metafiction in postmodern thought, there is a big concept, 'historiographic metafiction'. As sources indicate, historiographic metafiction is first coined by Hutcheon (1995) to refer to novels that fictionalize actual historical events and characters.

The postmodern relationship between fiction and history is an even more complex one of interaction and mutual implication. Historiographic metafiction works to situate itself within historical discourse without surrendering its autonomy as fiction. And it is a kind of seriously ironic parody that affects both aims: the intertexts of history and fiction take on parallel (ibid. 1995: 4).



Scholars have suggested their own views for distinguishing historiographic metafiction from its historical fiction counterpart. For example Szidonia (2010: 4) suggests a demarcation between these two techniques-historical fiction and historiographic metafiction:

Historical metafiction tackle the question of history differently than earlier historical fictions... Firstly, in the choice of characters: in historical novels characters are types, results of a generalization of the image of people as the time, whereas in postmodern works characters are more often peripheral figures. Secondly, the historical metafiction differs from the historical novels, in the use of historical details: while the later assimilates them to create verisimilitude.

Characters in historical fictions should be famous figures that a certain nation regards as iconic. The society to whom these figures belong considers them as they are characters who should deserve what soever very fantastic story treated in the text. Thus, the characters in the narrative in this case are different from any ordinary person in the community that is why the community considers them as important figures of the nation. However, characters in the historical metafiction are not expected to be famous personalities, rather any ordinary person can carry the big personal traits treated in narratives. The fantastic narratives given to ordinary characters are used for the development of the story other than telling extraordinary events. The most emphasized idea in postmodern thought is related to the presentation of narratives which is different from what are taken as normal life engagements. From the very beginning, postmodernism has been inaugurated in the way in which it is driven to provide the challenges on canonic concerns of life. The following section deals with intertextuality as one of the basic postmodern narrative strategies.

#### **3.7.4. Intertextuality**

There are experiences where one literary product is used as the basis for the production of another. Normally, the latter produced text may be in favour of the former, or it may be against the formerly produced text. As has been discussed, postmodernism has been born after modernism. Postmodernism is technically associated with intertextuality. This is the concept related to Haberer (2007) “Intertextuality is a concept often associated with postmodernism, more particularly with that sphere of postmodernism where literature encounters critical theory. Postmodernism can be viewed as a development of modernism” (ibid: 54).

In addition, postmodernism has no a feature of claiming something is original. This is the concept directly related to what intertextuality, the interwoven nature of texts, is meant. The interwoven nature of texts is not limited at one level. As one could be the cause for the production of another text, the newly produced text also has a chance of being the cause for further textual developments in any way, either in favour or against the formerly produced text. However, in postmodern sense, intertextuality is mostly practised in the way that can create some adjustments on the formerly produced text. Intertextuality in postmodernism is intentionally made to show some departures between the interwoven texts. This notion may be related to Juvan (2008), “Intertextuality deconstructed the postulates of influence; for example, the concepts of author, the logic of cause and effect, and boundaries between texts” (ibid: 2).

In intertextuality, issues like, parody and pastiche are considered (Bennett and Royle 2004; Jameson, 1992). Both parody and pastiche as per these scholars rely on imitation of earlier texts or objects. In parody, there is an impulse to ridicule by exaggerating the distance of the original text from ‘normal’ discourse. This is what the postmodern notion of intertextuality emphasises. Intertextuality in postmodernism is designed to create a distance between the interwoven texts.

The postmodern, however, no longer accepts the notion of ‘normal’ language: pastiche is blank parody in which there is no single model followed by no single impulse such as ridicule and no sense of a distance from any norm. Anyway though the sense may not be clear to the reader to identify where the original work of the concept imitated through the techniques of parody and pastiche, we can possibly sense that the experience of intertextuality is there in postmodern texts, for postmodern features don’t aspire or claim a question of originality.

In the postmodern sense, originality is not valued. Postmodernist thought informs the concept that nothing is originated from in vain. Though we do not exactly know what that sources is; there should be a source from which something is originated in the way we could not identify the beginning or the source and ending of discourses. In other words, under the postmodern notion of intertextuality, there is no clear originality and ending of a certain discourse. In simple terms, in postmodernism, narratives are made in an interwoven nature where the original and imitated are not clearly identified. This is what intertextuality in the postmodernism sense means. The next part is preoccupied with another basic feature of postmodern narrative strategy- interrogating reality.

### 3.7.5. Interrogating Reality

Postmodernism, from the very beginning, has come to interrogate the rationality behind modernist philosophy in various issues like politics, morality, religion, and history. Modernism has a strong value for human rationality which could be used as a principle across the globe, especially the westerners'. However, as the history of the world has revealed, rationality of people has been losing acceptance. It is experienced during the holocaust which is associated with the killing of millions of Jews by Nazis in the 1930s and 1940s. The idea suggested by Professor La Capra of Cornell University when an interviewer, Goldberg, has asked the professor to react to the validity of western rationality and civilization is very important to conceptualize the interrogation of reality under postmodernism, (Goldberg, 1998: 1-4):

If we really believe that the West is the high point of civilization, and that there has been some development over time in the direction of increased sensitivity to suffering and injustice, and if we really do see the story of the West as that of enlightenment, then it's very difficult to come to terms with the Holocaust within that frame of reference.... And postmodernism can also be defined as post-Holocaust; there's a kind of intricate relationship between the two.

Western rationality in particular and human rationality in general has no value to be grounded in. In other words, human activities especially the westerners' that the modern philosophy had considered them as just and fair have been interrogated. This is revealed when people are mostly seen in engagements like destructive, immoral and other similar actions which are far from the so called 'rationality'. In addition, postmodernism leads people to interrogate the rationality or reality which could be taken as a model by the advocates of modernism. For postmodernism celebrates the multicultural variants or plurality for the various nations have variants which could not be subsumed into one model, reality is expected to be contextualized. The westerners' model which has been expected to be used across the globe could not be used as framework of evaluation. It is not appropriate to be used similarly across the globe.

Hence, postmodernism strives to the treat reality from various aspects of the world. Individuals across the globe are not supposed to exercise one reality where they are practically different in many regards. People are engulfed in many realities across the entire globe. They have only one thing that could be taken as a canonic tradition in literature, history, and any mode of life at

large. It is difficult to practise one thing probably things similarly where differences are many in their type and prevalence across different nations of the world.

In relation to interrogating reality, Lyotard's (1984) *The Postmodern Condition: A Report on Knowledge* could be taken as a framework. In this regard, Lyotard has discussed and commented on the knowledge which could be taken as a reality in which people are governed. As to Lyotard, from the very beginning, postmodern narrative has had the intention of reconsidering the knowledge which the computerized world takes for granted. He states the idea that knowledge ceases to be an end by itself. It loses its "self value". In other words, something that is considered as knowledge does not have an absolute grantee to be so; rather, it is something that should be revisited. This notion of knowledge is directly related to the notion of postmodern narratives more specifically to the interrogation of reality. Postmodern narratives have a sense of reconsidering the ontology or the reality which a certain society takes as real. Thus, the reality which could be taken as canonic for our life engagements has to be interrogated. This thought, as it has been explained so far, is real or applicable in all circumstances with the presence of different forms appearing in different circumstances variously. As Lyotard (1984:5-6) posits:

The nature of knowledge could well have repercussions on the existing public powers, forcing them to reconsider their relations.... In this light, the new technologies can only increase the urgency of such a re-examination, information used 'in decision making (and therefore the means of control) even more mobile and subject to piracy (Lyotard, 1984:5-6).

Lyotard further explains under the section which deals with 'Legitimation of Knowledge that a certain knowledge which could be taken as a reality does not have a legitimacy to claim originality. In turn, this notion has a feature related to a postmodern notion of 'intertextuality. In other words, this is one chief feature of postmodern narrative strategies. It is the idea which refers to realities are interwoven in which they could not be original and just. The stature of knowledge, man's reasoning skill in turn, is in question. It does not have a guarantee to be perfect which could be considered as true. Lyotard (1984: 14) further describes this idea: "We cannot conceal the fact that the critical model in the end lost its theoretical standing and was reduced to the status of a "utopia" or " absence of hope," a token protest raised in the name of

man or reason or creativity, or again of some social category such as the Third World.” Here, the concept, “the absence of hope”, in the quote enables the researcher to deal with another feature of postmodern narrative discussed previously, fragmentation. This is also used for referring to ideas like uncertainty, disordered, confusions generally described as a subtle or obscured impression on what are going on and what are going to be.

In general, the idea by Lyotard is related to “the interrogation behind the rationality of human mind” which refers to “interrogation of reality”. It is also related to intertextuality and fragmentation. All these are in turn basic features of postmodern narrative strategies. In other words, interrogating the rationality behind reality which could be taken as knowledge that individuals take as real is one of the chief features of postmodern narratives. Thus, Lyotard’s idea of “a report on knowledge” will be used as a theoretical framework for the analysis of novels under discussion. Because as scholars agree on the idea that the main point of argument in postmodern texts is the question behind reality in which the human mind takes as rational Saracoglu (2003).

Moreover, postmodernism denies the pseudo rationality between high and low mode of presentation of the globe where some traditions are privileged as high over the others. Hence, in line with postmodern thought, no tradition is superior and inferior to the others. All are equal in their ground. In this regard, it is possible to take Bertens’ (1995): the politics of culture, as treated in his book entitled, *The Idea of the Postmodern*, and Hutcheon (1988): *The poetics of postmodernism* which, is mainly related to the denial of ‘high over low’ presentation of culture which is a kind of Derrida’s ‘Differences’ on deconstruction.

Under the notion of high over low presentation of culture in Hutcheon (1989) and the politics of culture in Bertens (1995), the denial of high over low representation of culture arises from the postmodernists’ assumption that reality is not practised in the way that it is represented. It is political in the way that can support the position of the upper class, in other words, the ones whose perspective is leading the society through this pseudo reality wrongly taken as a reality which may concern the whole.

In presentation of the world as it is not politics and aesthetics become indistinguishable, with the political and aesthetics occupying the same moment. Ideally, such presentations will have the effect of disrupting (ideologically comforting) presentations of the world-as-it-is, and introducing the complacent bourgeoisies to the existing uncertainties (Bertens, 1995:88).

The presentation of reality is striving to strengthen the ones who are in the upper class in the different life engagements like political, social, cultural and religious aspects of life engagements. And it is in the eyes of postmodernism that we can realize the fake behind pseudo-reality, the reality which is wrongly represented as real.

The idea is further explained in the same book: “Representation has acquired a sense of materiality. To control representation, which now no longer reflected reality, but instead had come to actively constitute it, was to wield power; to attack representation was to attack the power” (ibid: 80). In the eye of postmodern narratives, the representation of culture as high over low is the issue that should be reconsidered. There is no culture which could be considered high over another.

In general, postmodernism interrogates the rationality behind western enlightenment and philosophy in considering the politics, history, religion, cumulatively culture of the world. Mostly, in modern period, enlightenment and civilization have been conceptualized from the westerners’ vantage point, and this is the notion which has to be revisited is the central thought of postmodernism.

It seems true that the westerner culture is considered as best which could be accultured by the rest of the world population as a model at the expense of the natives, or the local culture at large. The westerners have been mostly taken as the cradle of everything in the world. Therefore, as it is mentioned above, the assumption which relies on the reconsiderations of these things should be made is the central idea advocated by postmodern thought. This is related to the interrogation of reality by which individuals across the globe are made to be governed. Having explained interrogation of reality this much, the next part of this paper deals with another postmodern narrative strategy-maximalism.

### **3.7.6. Maximalism**

Unlike minimalism, maximalism in postmodernist thought is believed to be the narrative strategy in which more descriptions, comments, and details of narratives are provided. The difference between minimalism and maximalism is shown by Sharma and Chaudhary (2011: 10):

Minimalism, the opposite of maximalism, is a representation of only the most basic and necessary pieces, specific by economy with words. Minimalist authors hesitate to use adjectives, adverbs, or meaningless details. Instead of providing every minute detail, the author provides a general context and then allows the reader's imagination to shape the story.

As to Templeton (2013), neither maximalism, nor minimalism, in postmodern thought is not expected to be purely opposite terms, and governed by what normally writers are expected to use as a principal aspect of literature. This is true because of the fact that postmodern thought has nothing to do with the canonic or the already conventionally structured aspect of literature.

Maximalism in postmodern literary narratives is a concept which works not only in creating long narratives, but it also does not care about the traditionally agreed narrative structures and plots in the narrative technique. Writers are free from any restricted plot structure. They are free in forming different narratives under the framed narrative in any form and length so that they can maximize the plot structure in any form they like. Writers can make the narratives in any size probably in a different mode which is different from the traditionally agreed mode and plot structure of narratives. The same is true for minimalism. They can provide minimal narratives in the way they like.

Taking the notion above into consideration, in postmodernism, there is no a question of how minimal and maximal a certain text is. Authors can extend and narrow the narratives they are dealing with to the extent of their interest as long as the style they maximize and minimize earns literary relevance in the narrative they are writing. In other words, as long as any technique is important to the way that the writers want to use in their writing, they are free from any restricted plot structure.

So far, the theoretical frameworks in relation to basic postmodern narrative strategies have been formulated. Thus, a postmodernist analysis and interpretation of the novels under study is made

as per the formulated theoretical frameworks discussed so far. Thus, the next three consecutive chapters are going through the postmodernist analysis and interpretation of the selected texts. These chapters are thematically categorized based on the nature of the chief postmodern narrative strategies. In other words, the analysis chapters are organized through the related thematic category of the chief postmodern narrative strategies, and the appropriate styles important to this undertaking. Thus, the next chapter, chapter four, is dealing with interrogating reality and fragmentation as basic postmodern narrative strategies in the selected novels.



## **Chapter Four: Interrogating Reality and Fragmentation in the Novels**

### **4.1. Introduction**

The previous chapter has dealt with details about different concepts drawn from sources about the very essence of postmodernism in general and postmodern narrative strategies in particular. Thus, the current chapter attempts to make detailed analysis and interpretation of interrogating reality and fragmentation as postmodern features reflected in the novels selected. As it has been indicated in the methodology part of this study, the analysis is made with the related thematic categories of basic postmodern narrative strategies. Likewise interrogating reality and fragmentation are basic postmodern narrative strategies which could intersect in their emphasis of uncertainty behind the different realities that the world encounters. Thus, interrogating reality and fragmentation are the chief postmodern narrative features discussed in the current chapter of this dissertation. This is going to be made through a close reading of the novels in focus as per the theoretical frameworks associated with interrogating reality and fragmentation as postmodern narrative strategies. The analysis and interpretation in this chapter upon the selected novels is fully preoccupied with postmodern narrative strategies.

As per postmodernists' notion in particular and in the practice of hermeneutics in general, scholars believe that final and binding certainty in the analysis and interpretation of texts is not attainable. In other words, in the analysis and interpretation of literary products, an everlastingly accepted interpretation and meaning is not achievable because of the different nature of sensing narrative features by different readers. Because of their different backgrounds, or exposures that the readers have gone through in relation to a certain narrative situation, they can feel the narrative features differently. The following idea by Stanzel (1971:29) reinforces this contention.

When the narrative situation of a passage clearly proves to be authorial or figural, the imaginative process in the individual reader encompasses is by no means fixed with absolute certainty. A reader's sensitivity will depend on his ability to see a given narrative element as characteristic of report like narration or of scenic presentation.

Here, Stanzel's idea of figural and authorial narration may be true to any analysis and interpretation of literary texts. In other words, an ending or absolutely everlasting interpretation and meaning is unattainable in literary analysis. This works for the analysis and interpretation of

texts from the views of postmodern narrative strategies too. However, it does not mean that readers could not reach a certain agreement upon the meaning and interpretation of literary analysis. Through the frameworks of analysis as lenses of criticism, it is possible to narrow the different ranges of interpretations that interpreters come across. In other words, it is through the windows of criticism that people can reach a certain consensus upon an interpretation and meaning of a certain text. Similarly, in this paper, it is through the theoretical frameworks explained so far, the analysis and interpretation made on the novels selected in this study from postmodern viewpoint is trusted. It is good to state the synopses of the selected novels before the actual analysis and interpretation made upon the novels. Hereunder is what the plot summary or synopsis of novels in brief.

#### **4.2. The Synopses of the Selected Novels**

The first novel selected for the analysis and interpretation purpose in this study is *Borrowing Freedom*. It is a novel by Mindaralew Zewde, and it is situated in two imaginary cities: Exjule City One and Exjule City Two. It is from the name of the ‘cities’ that the political ideology in the narrative is made to be Exjuleism. This concept of Exjuleism extends to the title of the mayors in the city too. The Mayors are named as ‘Exjule One’ and ‘Exjule Two’ respectively. These cities are the cities imagined to be there in an imaginary country, Ajeebuax’s leaders in the story call it ‘People’s Justice, Freedom and Democratic Republic of Ajeebuax’.

The story development of *Borrowing Freedom* starts with the accusation of Agodo, the young writer and opponent of Exijulism, the political system of the country, Ajeebuax. Agodo’s idea is endorsed by other protagonists like, The Sage, a man who has got experiences in Ethiopia due to the scholarship he has won. The Sage is the protagonist of the narrative. The idea of opposing the leaders of Ajeebuax is also supported by Ashton, a teacher, doctor and daughter of The Sage. However, she does not know she is the daughter of The Sage. In other words, she is in illusion throughout the story development that she does not know she is the daughter of The Sage. She is in dramatic irony till the idea is clear to her at the end of the story.

Since the story comes to its end in an intertextual form, it is not exactly known how the story ends. The story comes to an end by being the cause of another discourse which will be discussed in the coming pages of the paper in detail. Having The Sage as the protagonist in the plot line of the narration process, the story comes to its end with the protagonist characters winners, The

Sage. In other words, the story comes to its end with a pleasant mood though most of its events and incidents are full of unpleasant things. Even these unpleasant incidents are provided with a black humour mood where by the sufferings are narrated in a fascinating way that reduces the unpleasant nature of the narratives.

Likewise, the second novel selected for this study is Fiker Markos Desta's novel, *Land of the Yellow Bull*. The story of *Land of the Yellow Bull* starts with the settings related to Charlotte's, an anthropologist and researcher from Britain, departure from her Hamar lover, Delti in Hamar to go back to her homeland, United Kingdom. It is composed of nonlinear narratives, and the story is started with flashback as a narrative technique. Charlotte arrives in Addis with her boyfriend, Steve Martin. Then she meets Kello Horra, a Hamar boy in Addis Ababa University. She asks Kello to be her assistant for the anthropological research which focuses on gender issues among the Hamar society of Southern Ethiopia. After some contemplation, he is okay to help Charlotte. Then, both Charlotte and Kello got to Hamar.

With some hardships in getting accustomed to the new culture, Charlotte and Kello spend some days dealing with the possible solution to Charlotte's cultural alienation. Then, their attention is trapped with one of the intended solutions for the case. They try to penetrate into the custom of the Hamar society by joining the practices carried out in the 'Ivangadi dance' (a traditional evening dance of Hamar men with unmarried girls).

In the 'Ivangadi Dance', Charlotte has opportunities to have exposure with Delti Geldi, a famous and respected hero of the Hamar society. Then life to Charlotte becomes far easier and lovely with the sexual affection with Delti and with Kello as her research assistant. So, she is in now a position of going deeper into the Hamar culture. Though Charlotte was initially in a serious problem in familiarizing herself in Hamar culture; finally, she is in deep love with Delti in particular and the Hamar culture in general. This leads her decision of being Delti's woman who could lead life with him in "Land of the Yellow Bull"- Hamar.

For the story comes to an end with the journey of Charlotte to Ethiopia from her previous homeland Britain after the successful presentation of her anthropological research to Manchester University, it is not clearly known in the narrative that whether she will lead life with Delti in Hamar or not. In other words, as a postmodern text, the novel comes to an end with an open

ended narrative where readers can predicate the coming incidents or narratives of the story differently.

The synopsis of the other novel, *The Thirteenth Sun*, goes as follows. The story of the novel starts with Fitawrari Woldu's pilgrimage from Addis Ababa to Zikuala Abbo. His purpose is not only aiming to be one of the pilgrims that go to celebrate the anniversary of the saint's day; but also, to have a healing from the saint to his sickness which has attacked his heart.

Along with having a healing from the saint, he has proximity with a conjured-woman in Zikuala. Fitawrari Woldu has the intention of having a healing from magical practices, practised by the conjured-woman whose husband has rented Fitawrari Woldu and his people a house for their stay during the anniversary of saint Abbo. Fitawrari Woldu has gone to Zikuala with his son, Goytom, his illegitimate daughter, Woynitu, and other individuals who have served him in carrying his body and other logistics needed to their pilgrimage.

The story covers some days starting from the eve of the anniversary to the day(s) after the anniversary of the saint. Though too sick, the Fitawrari has experienced the celebration of the anniversary there at the church. After the experience of the celebration of the anniversary of saint Abbo, Fitawrari Woldu expects a healing from the conjured-woman who is helped by a priest in her magical practices through which she tries to cure people and animals with health problem. Though Fitawrari has been zealous to get a healing from both Saint Abbo and the conjured-woman, the result lasts in vain, and the story comes to its end with the death of Fitawrari Woldu and the peasant, the husband of the conjured-woman, and he is the one who rapped Woynitu, the daughter of Fitawrari Woldu.

The most tragic part of the story comes at the end part of the narrative. Though most of the life experiences of the Fitawrari are irritating, for Fitawrari Woldu has been a very cruel, dictatorial, miserly and power hunger official who has exploited, flogged, slashed..., most people, one feels sympathetic to the end part of the narrative that Fitawrari Woldu has experienced. At the end of the narrative, people including his former loyal servants are not interested to carry Fitawrari Woldu's corpse. It is so because of the bad odour it produces calling voracious vultures and other creatures to eat the corpse unburied.

In short, the story of *The Thirteenth Sun* is the experience of the narratives between pilgrimage of the sick Fitawrari, Fitawrari Woldu, from Addis Ababa to Zikuala and the journey of his corpse from Zikuala to Addis Ababa.

Similar to the above consecutive plot summaries made upon the three novels, the synopsis of the fourth novel goes as follows. The novel is entitled with *Eyes and Mist*. This novel is one of Ethiopian novels in English, and it is written by Tariku Abas Etenesh. It is a novel situated in many places of the world. Its setting includes Africa starting from Ethiopia, Congo and Ghana to England, and it stretches as far as America, Israel and China. The main issue in which the story evolves is related to accessing the African countries (Ethiopia, Congo and Ghana) with wireless electric power. Under the mission of this project, there is a conflict between the innovators of the project and the leaders (the African leaders) represented by Eyes and Mist respectively.

The innovators would like to provide this wireless electricity project secretly, and they like to practise the project with the cover of establishing a centre for autistic children. They like to make their project secret for they fear the pressure that comes from the mists and the people at large. This secrecy is done for the simple reason that the innovators expect the people may think that the project will have side effects in the environment. In simple words, the innovators fear the threat that people will complain related to environmental pollution resulting from the project. So, they can use the establishment of the autistic center as a cover for their secret mission-the production of wireless electric power. With this secrecy, the narrative is preoccupied with lots of extraordinary narrative elements and conspiracies between close friends too.

Unfortunately, before the actual realization of the proposed project, the innovators of the project are labeled as criminals in line with the whereabouts of the children (they are labeled as the ones who steal children for hidden agendum). The innovators gather children in their autistic centre which they use a cover project for their main project-provision of wireless electric power. Especially Abi, the character labeled as an autistic and right hand impaired eight years old child, is taken as a focal point of the story. The characters that are made as Abi's traits and his attachment with Dr. Selam, the psychiatrist, seek one's attention more. Abi has special talents in computer and mind reading.

The story comes to its end after lots of conspiracies in the narrative process among characters even characters in the same plot line or among friends too. There are conspiracies among people

in the same missions and other individuals in the story. Finally, the story comes to its end with an open ended manner where the accusation of the very famous individual who leads the project surrenders herself to the police. She is one of the main personalities in the project, and the story comes to an end with the publicity of this news.

So far, the plot summaries of the respective novels have been briefly stated. Hence, the next task is expected to be on the detailed analysis and interpretation of the novels as per the designed theoretical framework. Therefore, as far as interrogating reality and fragmentation as postmodern narrative strategies are concerned, the analysis in relation to these postmodern features goes on in the consecutive pages as follows. Therefore, the analysis and interpretation of the novels from the vantage point of these postmodern narrative strategies goes as follows, and the first postmodern narrative strategy which is going to be discussed in the novels selected in this chapter is interrogating reality.

### **4.3. Interrogating Reality**

The first theoretical model for the analysis and interpretation of the novels in the context of Lyotard's (1984) *The Postmodern Condition: A Report on Knowledge*. In this regard, Lyotard has discussed and commented on the knowledge which could be taken for granted in the big concept of reality. Under this notion, postmodern narratives have a sense of reconsidering the reality which could be taken as canonic for the different life engagements at large where they are taken as real regardless of the fake happenings behind them.

With the presence of different variants appearing in this vast globe, the postmodern notion behind is related to the idea that one real thing is not real or applicable in all circumstances. As a result, the way in which one sees something is definitely different from the others. It is achieved because of the different backgrounds and intentions that people have gone through as per their life engagements. What is real for one may not be real for others. For example, Agodo's printout whose title is used as a title of the novel, *Borrowing Freedom*, is a masterpiece for him. However, it is a master death sentence for his antagonist's view. Here is the relevant extract from the novel.

“Is this your work too?”

“Yes” answered Agodo Euioa. “It is my masterpiece I must add.”

“You had better name it your master death sentence”

“It is contingent to the nature of the spectacles one wears. Put differently, what you see is predicted on how you see it. If you wear bloody red glasses, things appear to you bloody red. And if you wear blue tinted glasses things appear to you blue.” (p. 7).

What matters is the way one can see things, and one’s consideration of things is different from the other’s. In turn, one’s reality could not be other’s reality. The masterpiece that Agodo claims to be is considered his death sentence as it is viewed by his antagonist, Exjule City Two. The below fortifies the idea:

“I have a question,” one of Litnen’s male assistant got himself shot to his feet,

“Air it.”

“Is the world narrow or wide?” He asked.

“It depends on the type of eyes with which you look at it.” Litnen tried her level best to meet his question.

“Yes there are many types of eyes. For instance, exjuleistic eyes, imperialistic eyes, anti-people eyes, etc.” (p. 501).

Similar to the above case, it could be good if the following extract from the novel, *The Thirteenth Sun* is added. In the extract below, there is a great difference between the mind styles of Fitawrari Woldu and that of the peasant who rented a hut in which the Fitawrari stays at Zikuala. The one who is great for the Fitawrari is not great for the peasant. For example, the Fitawrari thinks that the one who is with blood (the one from the nobility) is a master; while the peasant thinks the one with money is his master. Hereunder is the extract which supports this argument.

“Your language smells very much of the soil. Did you not have by any chance a master who could teach you how to talk to your superiors?”

“Oh lots and lots of them. Anybody with money is my master for that matter.”

“I mean men of blood; men who could teach you how to conduct yourself in decent society.” (p. 13).

The above extracts are not the only extracts which portray the different realities in politics, religion and various aspects of human engagements. These issues are going to be discussed based on the point of reference as reflected in the novels. Therefore, the purpose of the coming

pages is related to the discussion of interrogation of reality, or the irrationality behind human mind from various perspectives. This is going to be practised based on practical excerpts from the novels selected for the analysis and interpretation purposes of the study.

#### **4.3.1. Interrogating Western Rationality and Enlightenment**

Postmodernism, from the very beginning, as a theory has come into existence as a result of the failure behind human rationality, especially the westerners' rationality which they need to impose on the rest of the world. This idea has been discussed in this study while postmodernism is discussed in relation to modernism and enlightenment.

The human mind is supposed to experience a world full of fair and just narratives. However, as the world has experienced contradictory narratives from the experiences that the world is expected to experience. In simple terms, the narratives in the world are not practised in the way people are normally expecting them to be. The postmodern way of approaching narratives is related to the discussion of these contradictory happenings and the irrational practices of human beings in various aspects of life.

The reality which could be expected from individuals is not practically similar to the reality across the world. The irrationality behind human beings, especially the western rationality, is wrongly supposed to be the model for the rest of the world. It is practically shown during 'The Second World War', especially during The 'Holocaust', that the Nazi took genocide upon the Jews. Under these circumstances, individuals could not develop a sense of trust upon the rationality behind human minds in general and the Europeans in particular. The concern of this section is revealing this notion.

The following extract from the novel, *Eyes and Mist* substantiates the ideas that the holocaust matters. The narrative is carried out between William and his grandmother who survived from the holocaust massacre by Nazi. They discuss this issue when they visit Auschwitz museum, a museum made in memory of the holocaust which led the loss of human life. The irrationality behind human mind in general and the western mind in particular is understood in the extract below. Surprisingly, this irrationality is highly reflected by people with the highest level of achievement. This is intentionally reflected by educated individuals and scientists. William is addressed by his grandmother from lived experiences that she has went through the practices experienced during the holocaust. The extract below describes the case in point.



“What do you think these so called scientists were doing?”

“Crime!” he said as if that was the only word he could think of.

“As educated and enlightened scientists as they were, in their time-I mean, do you think they were mindful of their acts’ criminal nature?”

“I don’t think they were unaware.”

“You see, son this is the problem,” she said... “They were perpetrating crime, yes but they could have realized it only if they were using your brain...They were feeling justification than remorse. If you had looked at their faces, you wouldn’t have found a sign of guilt.”... (pp. 121-122).

William’s grandmother further explains the irrationality behind human mind especially the westerner’s irrationality. One like William can understand the idea that the holocaust is the irrationality behind Nazi. However, as William’s grandmother explains the points, the Nazi is the immediate cause that is made to put the Europeans’ past remote irrationality into practice. The idea of relating the holocaust with Nazi, according to William’s grandmother in the novel is a readymade perception that the Europeans have provided as a cover of their remote past injustices they have made upon the rest of the world.

The unjust mentality and practice behind the Europeans’ mind have been exercised for long centuries. Injustice practices similar to the holocaust are not practised only by Nazi of the Germanys. There had been lots of practices that the European countries had played before the holocaust. The holocaust, as it is mentioned in the extract below, is the practice which could be considered as the immediate reflection of the European nations.

There were other deeprooted pretexts that the Europeans had been playing upon the rest of the world. They had played these games in the names like, civilization, missionary and other practices as a cover for their hidden injustices or irrational practices that they have played so far. The extensive extract below, as described by William’s grandmother to convince her grandson, William, may better describe this point of discussion, and the extract is stated as follows:

“Those people I met in the concentration camp, who were perpetrating cruelty, were blind enough to believe they were ‘justified’ to do so because their leaders, whom they saw as gods, had said so...This was a result of the long time of layers of tolerated injustices piled up in the collective unconscious of Europe before the Nazi of Europe.” ...

“Son, in terms of education, you are one of the most privileged; you went to one of the best universities in the world; but even you, when it comes to the discussion of justice among human beings, read the readymade answers.” ...

“Well, Nazi is the name they took when they came to power in Europe. In other parts of the world they had taken all sorts of names. They went with names like civilizers, missionaries and colonizers...” (pp. 125-127).

The idea mentioned in the extract interrogates behind the reality that has artificially been created by the Europeans. The Europeans have been hiding their reality with the mists or covers like missionary and civilization so that people can see this reality as a justified act. As it has been indicated in the extract, even the people who came to kill the others in the concentration camps took this action as a justified action for the simple reason that they have been sent to do this killing by their masters who crafted the reality.

As long as the realities mentioned above are taken as models of the pseudo-reality, the practitioners are okay and fast enough to practise, since they are ordered by their masters. Though the very natures of the practices are inhuman, the practitioners do them without any contemplation and hesitation. As it has been discussed in most of the discourses in postcolonial discourses too, the realities that the European colonizers or the so called civilizers designed should be interrogated. Thus, people can be free from taking the mystified realities as realities free from injustice and irrational mode of human practices.

Moreover, it is good to consider the discussion of the following idea which deals with the irrationality behind human mind. The extract deals with the irrational trait of human mind which the western or the modern and enlightened periods take it as rational and just. However, though the human mind is taken as fair in the modern thought, free, rational and just, in the eyes of the postmodern thought, individuals are not rational and just. The following extensive extract taken from the novel, *Eyes and Mist*, could support this contention.

The mist that drives men to feel justified in engendering all the heinous acts imaginable, such as apartheid, slavery, colonization, ethnicity, genocide, inequality of men, servitude, under the pretext of a venom drunk from a classic stylish chalice was supposed to be not venom. The mist that for the last couple of thousand years saw man's rational consciousness slipping into a murderous and destructive frustrations that prides itself with the power of annihilation. Calling for submitting his creative will to fear and becoming subservient, insecure creature that relies on powers and energies of the unknown mystic power at the expense of his own mind... (p. 345).

The issue of interrogating the western reality in general and the irrationality of individuals in particular could be concluded with some sample extracts from the novel *Land of the Yellow Bull*. For example, the following extract deals with the interrogation between Charlotte and her white lover, Steve, about the threats that Steve expect when she is going to Hamar for research. In the extract below, though both Charlotte and her lover Steve are from the west, they are not in the same track of taking reality. Steve is not happy to let Charlotte to go to Hamar; while, Charlotte is not okay to accept her lover's advice. There is not only one universally accepted reality. Something will have different realities when it is considered from different frames of reality. The following extract from the novel can better describe this point of discussion.

“We evaluate every life encounter and give it a good or bad interpretation. We may like or dislike it not on its own merit. But life is a bit obscure; it needs a plausible reason and explanation. While someone understands that living consists of understanding and doing good things, someone else takes death as the goal of life and loses hope with fear. Death is the leap point that transfers the human life not the human work. For me my life experience in Hamar is has given me new perspective and I have chosen to live with it, while my experience has created fear in you. Our position varies our way of looking at things, but the object remains as it is,” she said. (p. 127).

As it is understood from the extract, something does not have a fixed correlation to mean something signifies only this or that is not worthy enough. However, it has different realities to which a single thing will be associated. This is related to the postmodernist view of interrogating reality. Unlike the westerners' view as advocated in modernist philosophy, postmodernist thought celebrates the notion of having realities which are not tightened only to one reality.

Similarly, the following extract depicts the dilemma that Kello has been behind the reality which leads him to happiness. Previously he has been in search of getting happiness through money and material commodity. However, he is now changing his assumption behind the reality which can lead him to enjoy happiness. Thus, the extract below reveals the reality behind valuing something is different based on the way things are seen.

“I don’t really understand the usefulness of a life exchanged for material benefit. Although I didn’t grow in my parents’ culture, there is no denial that I had been born in this same culture. I have been striving so far to buy happiness with money as if it were a commodity... value is how we represent it to ourselves.”(p. 182).

In addition, based on the background in which one went through, one’s reality is not the reality for the others. Likewise, in the extract below the reality in which most of the world people have been going is something which is unreal to Goity who lives under the sky of Hamar society. Goity is in a position of confusion to take the idea that people can fly in the sky by airplane as real. Goity’s mind style in particular and the Hamar people’s world view in general is vividly described in the extract taken from the novel, *Land of the Yellow Bull*:

“Oh come on! Konso is here, close to your territory. But I come from a far away and travelled by an airplane to come here.”

“Yea that is absolutely a makeup story. I am serious ok!” Goity cried with a steady gaze.

“I am sorry; have said something to offend you?”

“Yea! Yes you have. Won’t people laugh at me for a full year, if I believed that human beings travel in the sky like birds do?” (pp. 323-324).

The idea in the extract above is funny to show the idea that let alone issues on some fabricated realities of the world, even people have different realities upon the actual realities too. Here, though flying by an airplane is true that most of the world community in the world is normally expected it to take as real, it lacks an acceptance in the minds and hearts of some people who did not get the exposure to this happening. This is what is experienced in the mind and heart of Goity in particular and the Hamar people in general. So, as a postmodern interpretation, our world is full of realities either based on the background knowledge of individuals, or by individuals’ lack of awareness on some of the fabricated realities of the world. Hence, our world is full of realities

other than one fixed reality, for one's reality may not be the other's so that the Europeans' reality has not been a guarantee to be taken as a model.

Furthermore, the following extensive extract could bring the discussion of interrogating reality in the novels to conclusion. It deals with the variation of reality between the Hamar people and the people other than their culture, especially people in towns which are nearly believed to be the replica of the western culture which is the point of discussion in this section. As has been discussed so far, what is real in a certain area is not real in the other area. Individuals with clothes in Hamar are seen abnormal; while, the people with naked bodies in cities are seen as abnormal. When she came for Kello's graduation in Addis Ababa University, Kello does not want Goity to be seen as abnormal in Addis Ababa. Though his assumption is left in vain because Goity refutes his proposal that she does not want to practise the practice other than her own culture, Kello does not want to see the issue made upon Charlotte when she had been seen with clothes in Hamar to his wife, Goity to be seen naked in Addis Ababa. The extract which deals this concept goes as follows:

“Do you really want to change my wearing style?”

“Charlotte is that what you want also?” Charlotte got silent.

“So both of you want request me to throw my skin and wear cloth just to be similar with citizens. If I am not mistaken this is what you asked me, is it not?”

“This is only for the time being.” Kello responded fast to lose the tension. “You know well what we to wear in Hamar! I am afraid that with your strange dressing you will feel discomfort and ashamed with people's staring...” Kello said loyally (pp. 352-353).

As a postmodern text, Goity, the one from the conventionally labeled 'inferior' culture, is not the one who could easily be convinced by the proposal. She is the one who could show the idea of interrogating reality. She could not leave her culture easily and exercise the others culture. Surprisingly, she is highly irritated and annoyed with her husband Kello, and her friend, Charlotte. Goity understands them as they are the ones who disregard her culture with no accepted measurement of evaluation. So, Goity raises very demanding issues in relation to her culture so that she does not want to be reluctant to her culture. She is highly surprised with the idea of considering her as abnormal and odd in relation to wearing experiences of the town. She does not want to accept their advice. She interrogates the ironies behind the reality as follows.

The following extensive extract describes this point of argument-interrogation of reality. Though Goity has been nagged by Kello and Charlotte to assimilate herself with the girl with a different culture nearly similar to the Europeans', she is very strong in showing the existence of realities, not one fixed reality.

“Yea, what do you mean by discomfort and shame? Are you asking me to change my personality to escape from discomfort and shame? A stranger is always a stranger. Why does he change his strangeness? ... Who could give you a merit of respect by hiding your strangeness? Your action should be condemned as an act of cowardice... you know that my sense of culture is high and my forefather's traditions are perfect...If you take me to the animal world, would you ask me to have fur like them, too? ...” Charlotte and Kello froze... (pp. 353-354).

Goity's argument attacks the conventional categorization of culture as superior over inferior. Though one expect that the Hamar culture may be considered as inferior from the eyes of the city point of view, Goity from Hamar should get acculturated, Goity is strong enough to express her culture is equally important. She is not supposed to exercise others' culture at the expense of hers. This is the point of discussion which is going to be discussed in detail in this paper under the section which deals with the postmodernist denial of superior over inferior cultural presentation.

So far, we have dealt with the issue of interrogating reality in relation to the westerners' rationality and enlightenment. The next section deals with the interrogation of reality in relation to politics and social contracts used as a binding rule of a certain society and the world community at large.

#### **4.3.2. Interrogating Realities in Politics**

Postmodern theory as a tool of analysis leads one to reconsider the 'reality' behind history, politics, religion, law and culture cumulatively. For example, the relatively long extract below deals with the social contracts directly related to the laws created by individuals can lead people to be irrational. Most of the time, human beings are victimized with the laws that they create. This is so, for the simple reason of taking the statements which are stated as: “**Everybody is equal before the law,**” even, “**No one is above the law.**” Though everybody takes these statements as true or real, they are not actually real. Above all, this problem will be more

problematic when there are unjust, irrational and discriminatory laws. It is surprising to see people are considered under the social contracts or laws they make. In simple words, in the excerpt below, there is a postmodern intertextuality which states that unlike God that does not worship his creatures, human beings worship the social contracts they create.

The sage was too deep in his favored current of thought to pull himself easily out. God creates human beings. Man creates law, the laws of nature barring. God never worships his creations and/or creatures. Man worships his creatures... Law as the creation of man is rendered invalid unless it is posited above and beyond its creator-man ... men are equal before or in the eyes of the law. Mind you, most, if not all, such laws in the history of mankind are unjust, irrational, discriminatory and racist. This is a curse of the most heinous colour. For there is no more curse than succumbing to one's own worst creation..., there is no more devastating curse than living the vituperation which has to say: No one is above the law (p. 263).

In the extract above, leaders who are preoccupied with the laws which are unjust, irrational and discriminatory are practising actions as they wanted as long as the practices they are doing are important only to the leaders' themselves. The leaders practise this action at the expense of other members in the nation. One of the protagonists, Agodo, in the novel, *Borrowing Freedom*, describes it as follows:

Agodo Euioa was of the stance that in the kingdom of the irrationaldom unhealthy greed is the centremost creed; where the poorest pays the most and lives the worst. That is why this global kingdom of irrationaldom is committed at a record vehemence to recycling poverty... (p. 1).

Let alone leading the poorest to pay the most and to live the least, the people with power, as reflected by Exjuleist leaders, are not okay to give what they take back to the people, the subjects from whom they take. In other words, most of the time, people especially the leaders, are not responsible to discharge the responsibilities that concern them. Surprisingly, they will use their power or social contracts as a means of escaping. The following extract taken from the novel under discussion may express this idea better. Officials are not asked to discharge their responsibilities they are supposed to fulfill.

How does a lion live? A lion lives on credit. On loan, you may name it.  
How does he pay for it? Who asks him for it? In the entire planet  
And the whole host of jungles at first? (p. 277).

Similar to the idea, leaders in the novel, *The Thirteenth Sun*, are dehumanizing the people in lower class to the extent of considering them as if the people in the lower class are considered as if they were not human beings. For example, the following extract from the novel under discussion indicates the idea that the ladies (the wives of the officials) consider the poor peasants as if these peasants were not human beings.

“I wonder what these goggle-eyed peasants feel in watching us and listening to us like this,” the big lady commented.

“I doubt if they ever feel anything, except, of course, hunger and thirst.”...

“Crippled creatures...” the big lady recapitulated and rising up to enter her tent. (p. 126).

In addition, in the novel, *Borrowing Freedom*, teacher Ashton deals an idea with her students while she is teaching them addition, a mathematical arithmetic. As it is reflected by the Exjuleistic leaders, it shows the idea that individuals lost trust in politicians in particular and human beings at large.

The extract below, indicates the interrogation of human rationality. Surprisingly, the issue is raised by students in primary first cycle level where the students who are supposed to learn the four basic mathematical arithmetic concepts. Teacher Ashton, the teacher of the students under discussion, is first very much worried about the idea that the students are not able to comprehend the idea, the mathematical arithmetic what she is explaining to them. However, she later realizes that the students are able to comprehend and rationalise things beyond her expectation. They are philosophizing things beyond the skill they are supposed to understand the basic arithmetic concepts. Let alone, understanding the basic arithmetic operations, the students are tough enough to state ideas which lead us to label politicians are individuals who are not trusted. Thus, the following excerpt is deliberately extracted to show how the students are capable of philosophising things beyond the expectation of their teacher, Ashton, in particular and readers in general.



“You have two kilometers of previously built asphalted road in use, and other three kilometers of asphalted road were recently constructed and went operational. Together how many kilometers of asphalted road do we have here?”

“Zero.” A reverberating sound of many voices came to on her ears...

“Look at my right hand. Think of my two fingers namely the pinky and the ring finger, and think as well of the other three fingers of mine namely the middle finger, the index finger and the thumb. How many fingers do you think on my right hand?”

“Five,” that same roar of pleasant sounds come again.

“Wonderful,” Ashton said, in a voice that was the next thing to roar. “Why do you think and say two fingers plus three other fingers add up to five while two kilometers asphalted road and other three kilometers asphalted road add up to zero?”

“Fingers are the works of God. Roads asphalted or otherwise are works of human beings. God does not lie to us. Exjules do...” (p. 23).

The rationality behind human minds in politics, as it has been depicted above, is less likely to be trusted. This is reflected in a surprising way in which it is presented by children in first grade levels. It is surprising to expect pupils in this level to philosophise things to the extent of the description made in the extract above.

In addition, the irrationality behind politicians as reflected by the extract below in relation to Exjuleists in the novel, *Borrowing Freedom*, is to the extent of considering them as they were people with no brain. This extract shows the people’s perception as indicated by a woman whose son is in a hard situation. Mayor Exjule Two is not happy to take this son to the newly constructed pseudo-hospital which is labeled as the best hospital by the fans of Exjuleism though there is not the referred hospital for real. Mayor Exjule Two was joking with the woman and the son when the son was between life and death. The extract hereunder may better describe this point of discussion, and that is why this relatively long extract is deliberately extracted from the novel under discussion. One could not expect a leader to joke at the boy who is victimized by an accident. Normally, let alone a leader who is supposed to be a model to individuals, even every ordinary person in the community could not do what mayor Exjule City Two does. However, as postmodern thought brings the reality behind human mind into questions, what is experienced by

Exjule City Two, the mayor, is expected from individuals. This idea is overtly depicted in the dialogue between him and the boy's mother as follows:

“Please permit us to take my son to the new hospital where he will receive the healing services of the professionals...” she had to stop as Exjule bawled impatiently.

“You will get the service you need only when I say so.”

“Yes dear Exjuleist.” The weeping mother sounded ...

“Didn't you hear my lady?” Exjule said. “I can see that his brain has been leaving his skull for hours now... what is a person going to become without his brain? Nothing! Practically nothing... tell me what can become of a person minus his brain?”...

“Get this” a person without his brain can become an Exjuleist!”(pp. 14-15).

Though the referred hospital is not there for real, the mayor as a leader is not expected to address the woman's request in the way he had addressed. The response that he has told to the woman with trouble is not expected from leaders in any kind. He could have addressed the woman in a different positive way that individuals expect from their leaders. However, taking his reaction to the woman for granted, one can visualize that how mayor Exjule is cruel, the one who does not care about his citizens whom he intentionally made them his subjects. That is why the woman is in a position of considering Exjuleists in particular and politicians in general as individuals with no brain. This idea is clearly stated in the last line of the extract acknowledged above.

In short, the following extract from the novel can bring the conclusion raised in relation to the interrogation of political reality in this globalized world. This concept is going to be explained with the concept of borrowing freedom. As long as borrowing freedom is made the title of the novel, it should be well discussed as the main point of discussion of the novel. In other words, as a title of the novel which is expected to be the cumulative representative of the whole narrative in the novel, the phrase 'borrowing freedom' has to be well elaborated.

Basically, freedom is understood as something that individuals need to have in their soul in nature. Thus, one may think of the people where they can practise freedom as they wish to exercise freedom. However, as the postmodern way of interrogating reality, it is different from this assumption. The reality especially the political reality that the countries in the world go through is contradictory from the reality individuals expect it to be. It is experienced in this way because of the irrationality behind the postmodern world. The political reality that some

countries especially the third world countries experience is not the political reality that they expect it to be real. In simple terms, freedom is not in their hands. It depends upon the way they borrow their own freedom from other irrationalists. As Agodo describes in examples, the extract below describes this idea.

The country or countries that say no to borrow their freedom from the global house of irrationaldom will be placed under a precondition to admit that the bread in their pocket is a bomb and accept that the same bomb in the pocket of the global house of irrationaldom is bread. Such countries face a precondition to admit that the poisonous gas in the jar is a poisonous gas of mass destruction and sing loudly that the same poisonous gas in the jars of the global house of irrationaldom is perfume... (p. 177).

The extract above shows the idea that the reality which is taken as real may not be actually real. In other words, the way that individuals say and think real may not be real. Therefore, the postmodern way of interrogating realities could lead people to be aware of the existences of various realities, not one fixed reality. Surprisingly, people practise some unreal things upon others while they are informed about the fake behind the matter they are practising upon others. Similar to the economically developed nations do upon the less economically developed nations, leaders in the third world are not rational. They expect their citizens, probably their subjects, to borrow their freedom from their leaders. This is practised in the way that the leaders borrow their freedom from the developed nations. The irony is that leaders do this upon their citizens while they know the reality behind this experience. For example, the extract below from *Borrowing Freedom* describes about the interaction between Chebodi, the leader of Ajeebuax, and an international journalist from the imperialist country.

Taking Chebodi's idea from the interview as a guarantee, it could be understood that leaders in the third world countries recognize borrowing freedom in relation to the interrogation of reality is a serious problem in the developed countries than the third world countries. This is the idea Chebodi has explained to the journalist while the journalist is asking Chebodi. Chebodi explained the issue different from the expectation that the journalist expects things to be. The journalist expects the idea that borrowing freedom is a problem which the third world leaders face. However, this idea is totally reversed by Chebodi.

“The international media as well as you know that Agodo coined a philosophical term, “Borrowing Freedom” as a philosophical reflection of the postmodern era. What is your take on that?” a young reporter in blue jeans and white scarf asked.

“Postmodernity is your problem and not mines.” ...

“How do you mean ‘Borrowing Freedom’ applies more to our countries?”

“Like you put it precisely, ‘Borrowing Freedom’ is a philosophy that caught very well the ugliness involved and the irrationality lived by global financiers and ringleaders. They coaxed at the least and forced as usual poor countries to borrow from them...When you borrow money what they see in you, among many symptoms, is your vulnerability to eventually hand over your freedom. Their big loans are the surest dints to stash your freedom in their wallets...” (pp. 307-308).

The irony behind the reality mentioned in the extract above is practised by the leaders of the third world dictators. As it has been slightly indicated in the extract above, regardless of their exposure to the issue, the third world leaders need their people to borrow their freedom from their leaders. It is similar to the idea mentioned in the novel as dictators and their followers are four times far from ‘reality’ (if one reality exists). It is stated in the novel that the first time, autocratic leaders lie to their own rationality as individuals, the second time they lie each other as party members and partners, the third time as it is reflected above, they lie to the people to whom they lead as a group. Lastly, they need to force people to lie to them by accepting their lies. The brutality of the dictators upon their own people in this novel could be indicated by the repeated strategy the leaders use as stated in various pages of the novel like: **“A kill a day will keep the opposition away!”** So, as described in the novel, it could be realized how cruel the leaders are.

So far, an attempt of interrogating reality in relation to politics has been made, and the next pages of this section deal with the postmodern interrogation of reality in relation to religion, morality and other aspects of life.

#### **4.3.3. Interrogating Religious and Moral Realities**

Postmodern conception of reality is not fixed to one reality. As it is reflected in the novels under study, the reality in which individuals live is not the reality believed to be real. It is the simulated and approximated/compromised way of life due to the irrational trait individuals have. It is reflected in the novel, *Borrowing Freedom*, in comparison to the death of the soul. That is why it

is said to be ‘inapproximation’, or ‘compromised’. The extract below describes this point of discussion.

High time we assented to the protruding fact that ours is a world where meaningful human existence and being suffered a perilous jolt from glut to dearth where the best in us is concerned. There is no more best in us than the soul. For the soul, the way I see it, it is the God in human. With the soul in us we are a little bit of God, to wit a little bit of omniscient, omnipotent, omnipresent... one can see how the soul is dying in us! And with the death of the soul nothing is left of us and in us save the compromise us, to say the least (p. 259).

From the religious point of view in the extract above, humanbeings have a chance to be best seemingly being closer to be omniscient, omnipresent and omnipotent. However, as the extract briefly states, this reality could not be practically practised in the way it is believed to be. Individuals live a life far from the expected reality to be. It is typically a postmodern feature.

Postmodernism is preoccupied with a narrative which shows discrepancies between what is promised to be and the different practical happening of what is promised. This idea is resulting from the irrationality of people or the loss of soul in the body. Related to this religious concept, the novel *Borrowing Freedom*, further describes. Donmuni in the novel believes that the origin of the reality which is going to be discussed in the following extract is religion.

The origin is believed to be religion; the extract attacks concepts constructed in association with the word “Right”. It is normal to come across with the expressions like the right track, the right hand man, the right wing, human right, birth right, and etc. in other words, it is obvious to know these expressions motioned here are used in association with the word, ‘right’ while we are interested to state positive connotations. In simple terms these expressions are mostly used when individuals like to express things or situations which are related to be good and correct. In other words, people use the aforementioned expressions in association with the word ‘right’ to something to mean in the right track. However, the extract below brings this notion into interrogations, and Donmuni strongly contends this point of discussion with the extract as follows:

“I am listening comrade right-hand of mine though I don’t believe in this right hand thing... I have a particular aversion for it. It represents for me everything I abhor. Think of the coined or compounded one way or another from this word-‘right’. Human right, democratic-rights, birth-right, the right wing, right this and right that... all the way to “may you God keep me to your right,; may you God keep me on the right track; ... may you God proffer me the right... and so on.”... “You see ... if everybody wants to be kept walking or working on the right road, right path... I am inured to saying: May you God keep me going to your left.” (pp. 515-516).

The above discrepancy of one’s expectation towards life and the different actual living style of this expectation is further reflected in the novel *Eyes and Mist*. The extract is taken from the narrative that Abi reads from the people’s mind. Though Abi is labeled as autistic by others, he has a skill of reading others’ mind. This skill disturbs Abi because of the irrationality of people whom he reads. The epistolary narrative that Abi has sent to Dr. Selam is placed as follows:

“You might assume that I could be enjoying this ability or reading others’ mind; I don’t. It rather makes me feel terrible. There were times I had vowed not to be read anyone’s mind, but it is only recently that I got the skill to control my powers. I hate my ability because it makes me witness the unfair tortures and suffering that people inflict upon them. I know you could be wondering what torture I could be talking about; I don’t blame you. You might not realize it because you are part of the self-torture scene.” (pp. 81-82).

The confusion in religious reality is dominantly practised in the novel, *The Thirteenth Sun*. Most of the narratives in the novel are preoccupied with ironical religious points. First, the Fitawrari who has the intention of getting healing from Saint Abbo is more attracted with the healing from the conjured-woman. This is magic which has nothing to do with religion. It is totally contradictory from the religious stands. Surprisingly, the magical practices experienced by the conjured-woman are supported by a priest. Normally, priests are expected to be the guardians of the principles of God. However, their practice as per the novel under the point is totally different from the expectation given to them. The following extract could support this argument. Goytom is commenting on the corrupted practices that the priests do in contrast to the most religious man- Saint Tekle Haymanot has gone through.

All these priests seem to be one with them...have you fed me, clothed me, sheltered me and all that bit of nonsense. Ignorant as they are, they don't seem to know the promise that was given to Tekle Haymanot, 'whoever is buried at your place will go directly to Heaven.' ... and that bit about sulphuric fire... it was meant frighten me, I know to make me squander my money on these good for nothings...Certainly, this poverty is a punishment inflicted upon by God for the sinful life they have lived working on Saints' days and holidays... (p. 48).

The believers are confused to the extent of considering magic as part of the religious practices. There is not a clear demarcation between their religion and culture they practise. This is so when the priest and the conjured woman practise is for granted. That is way they slaughter the sacrificial sheep for the magical purposes at the place where the church of Saint Abbo is located. Normally, what is slaughtered at churches is not a magic so that the meat is allowed to be eaten as a flesh and blood of Christ so that people (the believers) can get both earthly and heavenly healing. However, in the novel under discussion, as the peasant who slaughters the sacrificial sheep is repeatedly told by his wife, the conjured-woman, the flesh of the slaughtered sheep is not eaten. Therefore, this is something confusing. In one hand, they practise the magical practices related to religion and part of religion, and on the other hand, they blame their religion including God to the extent of all the sufferings are resulted from God. The following extract states the idea that the conjured-woman is blaming God as He is the source of all the sufferings people in their lives encounter.

"Things are not what they look, sir. People are poor because God has willed it that way."

"Oh no, don't put the blame on God...", the priest protested.

"Why shouldn't I? Isn't it He who brought on us all the calamities of the past months?"

Locusts destroyed our crops; then cattle disease broke out; and then to complete the misery, the summer and spring rains failed..., I am not blaming Him for nothing." (p. 60).

In addition, the gap between the promises and failures into practice is not restricted to individuals. It extends to the organizational levels. For example, the following extract from *Borrowing Freedom* proves this argument. In the extract below, the abbreviated words "UN" and "AU" are written "You-N" and "A-You" respectively. In postmodern narrative, defamiliarization is used in the way people can write their narratives in any form they like. As it has been repeatedly

discussed, postmodernism from the very beginning has been inaugurated to challenge the conventional aspects of narrative strategies. Writing “You-N” and “A-You” instead of UN and AU may stylistically indicate this notion. There are other narratives which show similar cases. For example, they comprehend the abbreviated words “ICC” as “I see sea”.

The extract below shows the absence of morality due to the gap between what people promise and their contradictory actions followed their promises. Surprisingly, they try to take justifiable reasons for granted behind their failure of the promises they promise to put in grounds. Likewise, the formerly mentioned organizations have gaps between what they promise and the actual practical happenings of their promise.

The text ‘Not because they couldn’t but because they couldn’t afford to lose poverty in their right minds’ in the extract below, tells something related to the postmodernist notions in relation to the irrationality behind the morality of leaders in the way that the leaders in the organizations mentioned above are not able to do things as per their promise. This is resulted not from the very nature of the gaps between their promise and actions and it is not because they could not solve the problem as per their potential to put the promises into actions. It is so because of their subtle decadence that the leaders do not like to put their promises into practice. They do these immoral practices for their own benefits. Thus, the extract mentioned below could support this point of argument.

“You had the audacity even to poke your accusing fingers at You-N and A-You. By the way ...how dare you point your indicating finger at the record of the You-N and A-You in keeping their promises about poverty reduction?”

“Forget your question and let me tell you something I heard people quip about You-N and A-You’s failure about poverty reduction. They say, ‘You-N and A-You couldn’t keep their promises on poverty reduction. Not because they couldn’t but because they couldn’t afford to lose poverty in their right minds.’”... “The said organizations couldn’t honor the promises they are inured to making about poverty reduction every time they stage their giga meetings because if they reduce poverty they will as well reduce themselves to nonexistence...” (p. 542).

Moreover, people have a tradition of having national pride in relation to the statues, monuments and squares in the name of individuals who have participated in national and international wars.



The irony behind this reality is related to the very nature of war and the feeling of pride that individuals earn from this harmful act of war. In most of the cases, people are heard talking the bad sides of national and international wars that the world has been experiencing throughout centuries. On the other hand, our world is in a position of celebrating the very important figures that have been participating in wars that the world has experienced. This is practised in the form of constructing statues, schools, hospitals, squares, and roads in the names of these figures. Likewise, Kofi, a character in the novel *Eyes and Mist*, is contemplating the irony behind this reality in Great Britain. Kofi contemplates this idea when he watches Trafalgar's square that the British dedicated to him for his contribution to a sea battle two centuries ago between British naval forces and the joint naval forces of Spain and France.

Among countries, their capital cities confess underlying similarity through the statues they erect to honour a common idea from their pasts. States erected to commemorate someone or some group that fought to defend or conquer a territory; that died or killed in a battle, in a revolution, in a conflict, in a combat or in something termed along this line that the respective nations regarded pivotal to their nationhood... such similarities are indicatives of an accord of nations attesting to a subtle streak of honouring savagery... (pp. 24-25).

Surprisingly, the above organizational and individual benefits at the expense of others' are practised to the extent of making wars as the source of their benefits and profits. People have used wars previously experienced. Let alone, being informed in the irony behind the reality expressed in the extract above, still, there are people and organizations that are using wars as source of money. Normally, it is known that wars are devastating actions that the world loses human and monetary resources. In contrast to this fact, there are narratives which could be taken as evidences for people have been in a situation where they are using wars as source of profits. Therefore, the following extract taken from the novel, *Eyes and Mist*, deals with the narratives that the world is in a position of using conflicts, disagreements cumulatively wars as a means of profit making. The following extract deals with William's astonishment in relation to considering wars as sources of profits, and this is expressed as professor Netsanet sates the matter as follows:

Professor Netsanet said, “I think I understand your concern Mr. William, but there are some troubling numbers,” she said and handed him a three- page long list of names and numbers... “The numbers on the first page indicate wars and armed conflicts where Prowess-made fire arms were the principally used ammunitions. And in more than a couple of them, the arms were sold and used at both ends of the conflicts, and the second page shows wars and conflicts. The last page obviously shows the rough estimate of prowess’s profit out of those conflicts...” (p. 133).

Thus, though war is taken as a very devastating action in which the world will lose the economic, political and human resources, there are realities which show the immoral nature of human mind in which organizations and people are using wars as source of profits.

Furthermore, the following extract from, *Eyes and Mist*, states the psychiatrist’s, Dr. Selam’s, surprise behind the reality in which the media presents the experiences in criminals and crimes as if they were something attractive which could joyfully be presented. Mostly, the narratives made in media about crime are not presented in the way that Dr. Selam expects them to be. They are presented as the acts behind crimes and criminals (detective stories) are fascinating. They are actually disguised and harmful actions. The reality behind this way of narration is something which takes Dr. Selam irritated. Dr. Selam is very much surprised with the way that the reporters’ presentation of professor Netsanet’s arrest related to the crime that she has made as an attractive and joyful experience of something, while they are dealing crime and crime related issues. This way of narration is surprising, for the narration is made attractively unlike the very unattractive nature of the practice- crime. The following extensive extract tells something which creates surprise in Dr. Selam’s mind.

As always the crime story was portrayed craftily with a tint of a Hollywood style acting storytelling: the good and the bad in perpetual battles that culminate with the bad losing after a lot of the good is sacrificed. As a psychiatrist, he feels the undertone that the media seems to turn is a naked act of luring the audience saying *hey viewers feel and enjoy this new shocking media adventure*. This role of the media for him is to the worst end venomous and to the least end seductively illusive... this time, he hated them more for doing it for his hero... (pp. 6-7).

Therefore, the presentation of narratives on crime and crime related discourses in a fascinating way is something which creates interrogation behind the reality in the way detective narratives are made. This is so in that crime and crime related discourses are not fascinating in their nature. However, most of the time people are enjoyed with these narratives while they are presented with something unattractive. This notion is similar to the way how black humour is practised.

So far, as one of the basic postmodern features, interrogating reality, has been discussed in relation to politics, religion and moral issues. Likewise, the next consecutive pages of this chapter will discuss another chief postmodern narrative strategy related to interrogating reality is fragmentation.

#### **4.4. Fragmentation**

Fragmentation is one of the most known postmodern narrative strategies, and it is used for referring the ideas, like distortions in narrative time and place, uncertainties of narratives, absurdity and the absence of linear narration process. However, unlike modernism, postmodernism does not lament on these fragmented narratives. Instead, postmodernism celebrates these fragmented and chaotic narratives as parts of life engagements.

From the very beginning, in the novel, *Borrowing Freedom*, there is no clear information on the place where the story is situated. In other words, uncertainty is there in the narrative which deals with the imaginative country, Ajeebuax. It is not possible to know the place where the story is designed in the world. This uncertainty where Ajeebuax is located is going to be discussed with practical textual data from the text. The utilization of Ethiopian proverbs and sayings may indicate the setting is in Ethiopia.

In addition, the Exjuleists' frequent utilization of the title, '**Enver Hoxha**' of Exjuleism for their mayor may relate the setting to Albania. It is the name of Albanian communist leader. However, the specific place where this imaginative country found is not known. Even when journalists from the imperialist country ask him, Chebodi, does not answer where Ajeebuax is found. Instead, he mocks at the journalists with unrelated words or distortion of the questions.

Moreover, the leaders applied a membership proposal to every part of the world, to Europe, Africa, Far East, the Middle East, and America. However, their proposal of membership does not get acceptance. This one is also vague to guess where Ajeebuax is found. A certain country

practically could not be in a position of applying a proposal of membership to the whole corners of the world. All these described things so far lead one to be uncertain about where this imagined country, **The People's Justice, Freedom, Democratic Republic of Ajeebuax**, is found. It is good to support this idea with textual extract that shows the leader's, Chebodi's, reaction to the questions regarding the location of his country. Chebodi is requested by some international journalists to tell where his country Ajeebuax is located. In this regard, Chebodi has addressed the questions in the way that lead one to be in confusion to understand where Ajeebuax is located. Let alone knowing where Ajeebuax is exactly found, even his answer does not allow one to guess where Ajeebuax is found.

“Thank you Mr. Chebodi. Where Ajeebuax is exactly located?

“...had you done at least your elementary and middle grade schooling in your country, you wouldn't have failed to know where Ajeebuax is located. Kids of any country the world over, in grade two, three or four know of it beyond demur...”

“Let me get it straight. Who are your neighbors?” Another reporter cut in.

“In the west we share common borders with IMF, World Bank, European Union, United States of America, and in the East we share common borders with China and the like.”  
(pp. 303-305).

As it is already explained, one could not get a hint to guess where Ajeebuax is found. There is no any union or zonal category of countries that Ajeebuax leaders do not propose a membership. However, every one of them put the proposal of membership down. Therefore, one could be in confusion in relation to guessing the place where the story takes place. This confusion goes to their ideology in which the country takes as a hegemonic political ideology too.

As it has been indicated in the introductory part of the analysis, their/the Exjuleists' ideology is “Exjuleism”. As a postmodernist text which does not consider the available models for ideals, this ideology is the ideology that does not have any feature similar to any political ideology available in the world. The following extract shows Chebodi's reaction to the question he is asked in relation to his hegemonic political ideology-Exjuleism. Chebodi's answer is expressed in an absurd way in which how one can understand what Exjuleism is by looking through Chebodi's eyes.

“Is it something or the other of Marxism or the kindred ideologies there of?”

“It is neither Marxism nor Liberalism, nor Neoliberalism, nor Revolution, nor Democracy, nor weird combination of them. It is just Exjuleism or boardism.”

“So what is Exjuleism exactly?”

“You have been looking at me the entire time and yet you fail to see what Exjuleism for real is.” Chebodi laughed decently. (p. 303).

Thus, as it is the confusion or uncertainty continues on the ideology, for the ideology, Exjuleism is not an ideology which is known in the entire world so that people do not know what kind of ideology it is. In turn, this implies the idea that postmodern thought does not take any benchmark as a model, for postmodernism has been designed to challenge the available models. The next consecutive examples are related to the narratives that are obsessed with absurd narratives in which characters are talking a lot about what they do not know to talk. For example, the following extract deals with the idea that an Exjuleistic leader is talking about the leader of a certain country while he is not able to mention the name of the country and the name of the leader as well.

“I was in power when the current president of what is the name of that imperialist country...”

“Which imperialist country?” the board boss frowned, his mind hunting for the names of countries that might fall in the caller’s category of imperialist country. “We have many of them today in our planet.”

“I have it right at the tip of my tongue.”

“You mean the people state of ...”

“You got it,” the caller hollered before Chebodi could get the rest words out.

“The current president of the said country was feeding on his mother’s breast while I was feeding on the demise of my enemies...” (p. 459).

The extract does not indicate which president of which country Chebodi is referring in his discourse. Therefore, it is an exemplary discourse in which one could not have clear understanding.

In addition, it is possible to add the following extract which states about the Exjuleist followers are talking a lot while they do not know the point of their talking. Surprisingly, the extract deals

with the people who got to demonstration about the issue which they do not know. Hereunder is the extract that Mayor Exjule City One is telling his City Two counterpart about his people's demonstration for the purpose they do not clearly know. The people are asking their leaders about what to do or what their demonstration is all about.

This demonstration is all about requesting the boss the board of directors to tell us what to do after taking to the streets. As you are a living witness of it my people are flexing their muscles for an Exjuleistic feat of unknown content. We have to prepare ourselves for any feat of Exjuleistic origin. That is what it takes, in part, to be honoured under the Exjuleistic governorship. You take to the streets without a specific aim at hand... (p. 49).

Moreover, it is good to deal with the following confusing idea about the novel. The idea which is going to be discussed in the extract is the Exjuleists' weird idea when their measurement of economic development is related to the number of prisoners accumulated in prison stations. It is very vague which individuals never expect to comprehend in such a way. The extract goes as follows:

“Our prison establishments have been dying for the last two years, as you all know, from the dire thirst from prisoners. Particularly after The Sage was set free some two years ago, we have been suffering agonizing from a horrendous dearth of prisoners... As you all are my living witnesses two days ago I took an Exjuleistic measure to incarcerate that wanton girl” (p. 99).

Furthermore, the next excerpt deals with another vague idea that Mayor Exjule City Two is requesting his City One counterpart to see a well-constructed hospital from the place where even there is not any sign of the said hospital at all. This absurd narrative is experienced because of the absence of the said hospital. Mayor Exjule City Two used the money allocated for the hospital to the construction of his own house similar to a well-furnished palace. It is very difficult to see a hospital from a plain ground where there is not any sign of construction at all. At the end, for the sake of agreement, Exjule City One pretended as he has seen the said hospital. In other words, after much more confusions, Mayor Exjule One pretends things as follows:

“I see.”

“Do you see, really see Exjule One?”

“Sure I do. I do see how you managed to erect that palace on the grave of the hospital.”

“Only that there is no grave of the hospital. Indeed the hospital didn’t die. It is still alive.

It is still alive, kicking and energetic as you can see for yourself it is standing proudly at 102% completion.”... (p. 65).

Like the previously discussed analyses upon *Borrowing Freedom*, the following discussions are made upon the novel, *Land of the Yellow Bull*. In the introduction part of the narrative of the novel, Charlotte faced a problem of penetrating the Hamar society. She was in problems. Things were complicated to her, and she was worried a lot. By placing herself in different places, Charlotte contemplates things from different perspectives. Hereunder is the extract which can show this argument.

“I know my research objective, but I really don’t know the subject... if I want to become successful, all I need to do is learn how to enter the Hamar world,” she thought, and clamped her jaw and swallowed hard. “I am a big girl know. The only thing I have got to think about is to experience the pleasure of making the impossible possible.” ... around dusk, she wondered out to the bush just to listen to birds, the breath rustling through the branches, and the sound of the wind chimes on the cliff. Charlotte dredged her mind tried to think of something to win the Hamars over on her side. (pp. 106-107).

The discourse states the confusion that Charlotte encounters in her mind. However, as a character in postmodern text, she is the one who has the stand that she thinks only the success after this confusion and problem. In other words, as a character of a postmodern text, she does not lament on the problems she faces. Problems strengthen her to tackle the problems more. When she thinks to marry Delti, the fear behind Charlotte’s mind is highly observed. She is a little terrified when she thinks the practices that are going to be experienced. She does not fear Delti. She loves him, but she fears the traditional practices like flogging, chasing and etcetera which are going to be made on her for the marriage ceremony. As it goes in Charlotte’s stream of consciousness, the following extensive extract may better describe this idea.

“May God have mercy on my situation!” she prayed forgiveness, hoping to get an excuse... she was out there on the Keske River bed, ready to be flogged. During that time her eyes slid over to Kello who was naked inside and outside... she startled waving with fear. “Why are you confused? You are dealing with conflicting goals. You have to decide between the two things you want. What is more, you have to choose between what you want what your profession wants?” she thought. (pp. 216-217).

Charlotte has been worried with lots of unanticipated narratives. At the beginning Charlotte was not penetrating into the Hamar society with the variation in cultural backgrounds. Therefore, things were fragmented or problematic to her at the beginning, and that is why first, she went to the Ivangadi dance. Even going to the Ivangadi dance is not enough to Charlotte to go deeper into the Hamar society. Then she wanted to practise the marriage ceremony between her and Delti. Though she loves Delti, Charlotte was so terrified with the assumption of practising the marriage ceremony as it has been described in the extract above. However, the unexpected marriage between Kello and Goity becomes a solution to her worry, and Charlotte does not want to lament on the problem she faces. With this marriage, she was able to penetrate the Hamar culture to the extent of loving and claiming herself as Hamar.

In addition, it is good to look into the following extract which is related to the natural and manmade infinite chaos that the people in the world have experienced. This chaotic narrative is provided in contrast to the free and lovely interaction Charlotte has got in Hamar. So, the extract describes the chaos as reflected in Charlotte’s mind as follows the nations in the world have gone through.

“How many people, children, women and the elderly were burnt by war, how many people are perished in natural calamities, how many of them died because of hunger! How much agony has this world has seen! How many people have from discrimination and injustice! The tears that have so far flown could have created oceans and will certainly create some more. The extent of suffering experienced in our century has been so great that it can hardly be measured.” (p. 270).

Unlike the characters in modern narratives which could create a prosperous and modernized world view, characters in postmodern narratives are not confused with this sort of chaos with which the world is engulfed; rather, they are celebrating the chaos. This is so, for the characters



in the postmodern narratives consider the world is full of chaos. For example, following extract deals with the challenges Charlotte and Kello in the novel face. Charlotte and Kello are not taking the challenges and confusions that they face as problems; rather, they aspire the success they will achieve after each chaos they face. The extract stated below may better describe this point of argument.

Charlotte and Kello had learned how to seek what they wanted through attachment. Getting involved in problems has absolute power to progress. That was why they paid the necessary sacrifice to attain their objective. They moved into tears of annoyance and anger triggered by their own experience. When they started tasks they felt pretty ambivalent about whether they had the ability to perform but later... they came to know they had more to offer their previous existence. They understood that after the dark, light would have to follow... (p. 271).

As it has been clearly indicated in the extract above, as a postmodern narrative, the characters are not confused with the obstacles that they face. Instead, they celebrate these obstacles as a mean to make them stronger towards the practices which lead them to the achievement of their previously intended objectives. In other words, as a postmodern narrative, the characters have a world view of having both challenges and successes. As it has been indicated in the extract above from the novel, both Charlotte and Kello are not the ones who refrained from the narrative progress that took them to the achievement of their goals. Moreover, it is possible to consider the problems experienced that Goity felt when she was taken to the city life both in Addis and England. The following extensive extract deals with this notion.

“In my fascinating world, everyone loves each other... cattle even plants love back as we love them...but here fences, races, cars, clothes, size, colour, and isolated one from the other. People who are masters of their wealth are controlled by the same wealth. They have no sweet and peaceful life. They use things without love and good feelings. Nobody is allowed to get into another’s compound. Those who need food never eat with others who eat in the corners. People focus on differences as setting them apart from other people rather than as complementary aspect that can lead to harmony. One shows compassion to his relatives only. People fear and hide from each other as they would like hunting dogs and sheep,” she thought sadly... (p. 357).

Here is the stage in which the discussion on fragmentation is moved to the novel, *Eyes and Mist*. The narratives in the novel, *Eyes and Mist*, are situated in different parts of the world. The narratives are situated in Asia, America, Europe, and Africa in relation to the project, Tesla project which is the concern of the Eyes. Therefore, the story is situated in China, America, England, Ethiopia, Congo, and Ghana. Therefore, the entire story takes place in all parts of the world.

Most of the characters in the narrative go through lots of hardships. However, as a postmodern narrative, the characters celebrate these hardships. For example, Abi went through a beggar's life with the very old woman who contributed a lot to raise his mother. Though Abi is able to communicate with people with his special talent-mind reading, unknowingly, he is labeled as autistic. Therefore, he was in a confusion in which people could not understand him. From the very beginning, he perceives everybody as if he/she were able to read others' mind. Hence, he is in a position of confusion with the way that he perceives others and the others perceive him. Before his attachment with Dr. Selam, Abi was engaging in a miserable life with the beggar in front of the gate of the hospital in which Dr. Selam worked. In addition, as he knows his special talent-mind reading, he knows that his maternal grandparents including his mother went through the very problematic life that most of the Ethiopian went through during the red terror, and it disturbs him equivalently to the ones upon whom the actual story has happened.

When Dr. Selam's life is considered, he is from the poor family background. As it has been discussed previously, he is from the family which could not afford Selam's needs when he was a school student. Though Dr. Selam became a famous doctor, his agonies of life are not resolved in the narrative process. His fiancée betrayed him. Surprisingly, she left him alone. She went to his best friend Fitsum, and this increases the agony that Dr. Selam comes across. Plus, in their first introduction, the special talent that Abi has created some sort of confusion in the mind of Dr. Selam. From the very beginning, Dr. Selam does not expect Abi an eight years autistic child with the special talent discussed under the notion of magical realism. This led Dr. Selam to sense life as if he were standing naked in Public Square.

The case is not different in Fitsum's life. Though Fitsum become very famous international journalist, his background is from a very poor family similar to his friend Dr. Selam. Apart from his poor family, his father had gone through a very miserable life. His father was a very famous

and respected General in the national army of Ethiopia in the Dergue regime. One day, Fitsum's father went to work with money that can be paid for the army members. Meanwhile, his boss asked Fitsum's father to stop the car and throw or burn into a cliff so that the government and the nation at large could expect an accident caused by some sort of bandits in the area is experienced. However, he was not okay to do so, for he believed that he became a soldier to serve his country and the nation at large, not for the wellbeing of specific individuals. This led him to be victimized by his own boss. Then his boss shot Fitsum's father with a pistol, Fitsum's father has got injured so that his boss did the things in the way he wanted to do-taking the money for his own benefit at the expense of the army members.

Regardless of the reality, the boss accused Fitsum's father of shifting the crime he has committed to Fitsum's father, by associating the fabricated idea that Fitsum's father was trying to steal the money allocated to the salary of soldiers in the national army. The boss then shot Fitsum's father to stop from doing so. Paradoxically with the dramatic irony for the nation did not know the reality behind, or with the fabricated story, Fitsum's father has been imprisoned for many years unfairly. In other words, Fitsum's father has been imprisoned for the crime he has not committed. This circumstance complicated Fitsum's father and his family in general. This is the profound cause for the family to lead a poor life, and it is directly reflected in the life engagements that Fitsum led when he was a high school student.

In addition, the life Abi's language therapist went through is also something confusing. She considers herself as a making of sin spirits for the simple reason that she listened to a discourse carried out between her father and her mother. From the very beginning, her father is a priest so that he does not want to take the responsibility of fatherhood. He thinks that her birth is unintended. As this idea is stated in the extract below, during her childhood, Abi's language therapist heard that she is a making of sins and mistakes. She heard this while her mother is nagging of the priest to take a responsibility of fatherhood. The priest does not want to take this responsibility; rather, he threatens her mother to keep the matter secret. The following extract may better describe this point of discussion.

“I will leave your house but think about I told you. I am not just a priest; I have special powers to call all sorts of spirits to work for me. You see woman. If you want to be safe, keep the secret with yourself. A mistake is a mistake. This child came unintended; she was a result of our mistake of the flesh,” said the priest. (pp. 268-69).

As it is indicated in the excerpt and before it, after listening the discourse between her parents especially what her father has said which led him lastly to kill her mother Abi’s language therapist thinks that she is a result of sins. Abi’s language therapist is unconscious when she visualizes the death of her mother after that touching discourse the priest told her mother. As a result, she does not consider herself as a normal human being; rather, she perceives herself as a creature of evil spirit. She has heard the priest while he is saying she is a making of mistakes and evil spirits. She is in a deep anxiety and confusion as Abi’s reading her mind is taken for granted. For example, as per Abi’s reading of her mind, the following extract shows what is going on in her mind. She is in confusions, and she blames herself as she is a making of sins. Thus, the extract below may better describe this point of discussion.

What she has heard that night many years ago is still haunting her like something happening at the moment. She always blames herself for being a child of sin: a child the work of the devil; a child destined not to be loved. Every day she prays to seek forgiveness from God for being what she is: a soul destined for evil ends, sinner whose existence was a big mistake. (p. 269).

After listening what is going on in Abi’s language therapist through Abi’s mind reading, Dr. Selam began to get the whereabouts of the priest, and he made confusion on the priest himself. Once, Dr. Selam has been informed what the priest did. With Abi, he went to the church where the priest is found. He has brought confusion to the priest. Dr. Selam told the priest a message which has been sent from God, and the priest could not easily believe the message to be true.

Moreover, the life of the woman who treated Abi as a grandmother after the death of his biological mother is also miserable. Currently, she is leading a life by begging; even she had been engaged in a shocking life around the Hatred River. As she was one of the residents of the area around the Hatred River, she experienced a very shocking life. The woman is a witness for the humiliation and tribulation that red terror has brought to the Ethiopians during the dergue regime. Therefore, the word ‘Hatred’ is enough to visualize the shocking life that the woman and

her likes had lived. The hardship the characters went through is not limited only to the fragmented, disordered, chaotic, and confusion mentioned. Almost for all characters involved in the narratives of *Eyes and Mist* went through lots of fragments and problems. For example, the problems that William's grandmother went through during the holocaust, Kofi's father and et cetera are cases in point.

Lastly, the following discussion from the *The Thirteenth Sun* can bring the discussion about fragmentation into its end. In the novel under discussion, almost all characters involved with their own problems. For example, the situation that concerns Goytom and Woynitu could be enough to visualize the problems that the characters in the novel under the point went through. Though he does not exactly know the way(s) through which his country would be developed, Goytom is in a situation where he worries alone about the development of his country. He comments on the bad system his father and his likes made, and he wants to replace this ruining old system with the new one which could be a means to the development of his country.

The magnitude that Goytom has towards his concern in relation to the development and wellbeing of his country can be generalized with the repeated sentence, "**I have to save my country!**" that he has used. The problems he encounters at the end of the narrative, where he has not got individuals to carry his father's corpse, where his strength has been exhausted with the long journey coupled with the heavy rain, are also narratives which could be indicated under fragmentation.

The case in Woynitu's side is also similar. From the very beginning, Woynitu is a making of illegitimate relationship between her money seeker father and her business woman mother whose work is equivalently similar to commercial sex working. She blames both her mother and her father for the situation in which she was in her childhood periods. In addition, her current life is also in vain as the expression, "**Hereafter I am like my mother!**", she repeatedly uses in the novel, *The Thirteenth Sun*, states. She has said this sentence repeatedly after she had been raped by the peasant, a husband of the conjured-woman.

All in all, the aforementioned examples so far, are not the only exemplary fragmented narratives reflected in the narration of the novels. These are some exemplary fragmented narratives. There are other sample fragmented narratives. To add some more, for example, it is possible to raise some other additional narratives in the novel *Borrowing Freedom*, like the frequently

unconscious experience of the Exjuleistic leaders. Leaders fainted in the here and there parts of the plot for unknown reasons. This despair narrative for some unknown reasons could be taken as an example for fragmentation. In addition, the experience of events and incidents come to their end in the unexpected line of the plot structure. The plot with full of ironies is also an exemplary fragmented narrative. Moreover, the leaders' style of producing similar discourse for different occasions is also another feature of fragmentation. Various occasions seek different discourse as per the variation of the point of discussion with the variation of occasions. Regardless of this fact, the Exjuleistic leaders produce similar introduction to any speech they are going to provide whatever the occasion is different. These all are some additional exemplary fragmented narratives. However, as a postmodern narrative, the cumulative sense of the narrative is not lamenting on all the formerly expressed fragmented narratives. They are used as source of humour so that the fragmented narratives are part of celebrities that the frame narratives in the individual novels largely present. As part of a chapter under the analysis and interpretation of the novels under discussion, the next chapter, chapter five, deals with other related basic postmodern narrative strategies , magical realism and self-reflexive postmodern narrative features.

## **Chapter Five: Magical Realism and Self-Reflexive Postmodern Narrative Strategies in the Novels**

As it has briefly been stated in the methodology part of this study, magical realism and self-reflexive postmodern features, like metafiction and intertextuality are related, since these postmodern features are mostly form oriented postmodern narrative strategies, and they are; especially metafiction is dealing with the way how the text itself is organized or narrated. Plus, these postmodern narrative strategies are intersecting in postmodern sense while they are dealing with the way how unbelievable narratives are presented without astonishment. The first section of this chapter deals with magical realism. Metafiction states ideas related to the fictitious feature of the texts; while, magical realism presents unbelievable narratives as day to day encounters. In postmodern sense, we take these modes of narration as real while they are dealing something unusual.

### **5.1. Magical Realism**

Magical realism is a postmodern narrative strategy which focuses on the presentation of mythical beliefs, supernatural traits and dreamlike elements in the way these magical elements are presented as part of our day-to-day narratives. Therefore, magical realism is a technique which includes the two extreme words, ‘magic’ and ‘real’ as binary oppositions. Magical realism is mostly reflected by the different modes of ironies (situational, verbal and dramatic), black humour/ a presentation of bad situations as fantastic, and defamiliarization, the process of presenting narratives in unusual way.

Though its elements are odd in their nature, unusual, and super elements, under the notion of postmodernism, magical realism is a way of presenting these, earlier mentioned elements, as if they were normal narratives. The following consecutive pages deal with magical realism in relation to the formerly mentioned concepts; namely, fantasy, irony and narratives related to defamiliarization.

#### **5.1.1. Fantasy**

As it has been discussed so far, the second theoretical model what is used in this paper for the analysis and interpretation of the novels is Jacques Lacan’s (1977): *The Mirror Stage*. Lacan has discussed the issue how an infant can sense his/her own external image shown through the

mirror. Here, the infant begins to develop a sense of “I” in relation to the external image that he/she can see through the mirror. It has been indicated in the theoretical models that the famous French Marxist, Luis Althusser, has extended Lacan’s theory into the individual’s reaction in relation to others in the society in which he/she lives. Thus, Lacan’s theory is not restricted to only the infant’s development. Similarly, Lacan’s theory of the mirror stage can implicitly be adapted to the discussion of the concepts in line with how the most rounded character, The Sage, in the novel, *Borrowing Freedom*, is viewed in relation to other characters in the narrative of the novel. This is going to be discussed through the views that characters in the story have towards the extraordinary traits of The Sage. In the novel, *Land of the Yellow Bull*, also fantasy is going to be investigated in relation to the way how the Hamar and other people mentioned in relation to the story under discussion are viewed with the outsiders and how the Hamars view the world out of their own world.

*The Thirteenth Sun* is also a novel in which magical realism is overtly practised with the narratives, like the magical practices that the conjured-woman practises in her attempt of curing people and animals with health problem, the characterization of Woynitu, the daughter of the Fitawrari as it is reflected by Goytom, her half brother. Here, Goytom is in confusion with the beauty and talent Woynitu has. He fantastically describes her to the extent of considering her as source of development for his country Ethiopia. Here, Goytom’s perception could be used as a mirror (external focalizer) through which the personal traits of Woynitu is described. And the other part of *The Thirteenth Sun* related to magical realism that can attract readers is the intermingled (absence of demarcation) between religion and culture.

Similar to the cases, in the novel, *Eyes and Mist*, magical realism is related to the narratives reflected in relation to an autistic and right hand impaired eight years old child, Abi. In the novel, very extraordinary personal traits that are not expected from an autistic infant are given to Abi as his normal traits. In addition, the very essence of making wireless electric power, the main purpose of the narrative in the novel, is also something related to magical realism. The aspiration of electrifying power without wires is something fantastic that can trap one’s attention.

The purpose of the next consecutive pages is related to the discussions of these and other similar narratives in the novels mentioned above in line with the postmodern consideration of magical realism. From the very beginning, the presentation of an autistic and right hand impaired eight



years old child as the point of attention of government and an internationally famous organization is something unusual. However, in the novel, this is presented as normal. For example, the following extract shows the idea that people who work in Tesla Project, the famous organization, make Abi their point of attention. This is something which could be taken as magic. How could an autistic eight years old child could be the point of attention of people in one famous organization is something magical. However, this narrative is made as normal to the extent of finding a brilliant internationally known figure. This extract tells the idea that Heath strongly advises Raul to get Abi by going to Addis Ababa from London.

“In Addis Ababa I want you to go to the autistic children centre and find out what the Chinese guy had done and make sure you follow the trails of the children; especially one of them.” “The organization’s chance of continued business hangs on the success of this assignment. If we fail, we lose the god; and that means the gods will have no use for our service; got that? I can’t allow that to happen on my watch;” Heath Brown is furious...

“What good does this child have for the gods?” ...

“Why worry on securing a child? But why should he worry about it?”

“Analysis is not his job. He simply had to follow words...” (pp. 42-43).

This magical narrative is presented as normal and day-to-day engagements of characters. This is granted in the excerpt mentioned as the last sentences, ‘Analysis is not his job. He simply had to follow words,’ imply. Taking Abi as a point of attention creates surprise in the minds and hearts of characters in the narrative. For example, the extract overtly indicated below supports this argument.

“Seriously?” said Phillip not trying to hide his disbelief when Chris finished his ten minutes monologue.

“Seriously, I am here to make to make sure that child is found and you could arrange Kofi the passage he badly needs.”

“What could possibly make an energy consultant from London and an autistic child in Ethiopian have in common?” I would like to know.” (p. 208).

Coupled with magical realism, characterizing very ordinary and simple individuals as very important figures is another typical feature of postmodernism. In postmodern narratives, important figures or icons are not taken to be the focal point of narratives. Very ordinary

individuals are taken to be a point of emphasis. Like Lacan's the mirror stage in which the child is considering him/herself in relation to his/her mirrorself, Abi in the novel is in a position of considering himself in relation to others whom he is reading. The narrative in the following extract is presented in the way where Abi, the narrator, is commenting on Abi as a character. Like the child assumes his replica through the mirror is him/herself, Abi is in a position of considering all the people are similar to him. However, as it has been indicated under the section which deals with interrogating reality, and as a 'narrator-I' is wiser than a 'character-I', Abi realizes the mismatch between what he has expected something to be and the different actual happening of what the expected thing is. The following extract may better describe this point of discussion.

“During the first months I realized that I could see people's memories, it was my assumption that other people too were endowed with the same ability as me and that there was no need among men to conceal what goes on in their mind. However, I grew up facing the fact that there is similar pattern of dread and concealment of feelings and beliefs among almost all me I have so far met. A reality of rational beings committing a large portion of their daily lives for self neglect and self disapproval but calling it sanity...” (p. 82).

The talents that Abi is characterized are related to his skill of reading others' minds and basic skill of computer are given to Abi, an autistic child. For the first day that Dr. Selam came closer to Abi in his trial to help the autistic child, Abi, Dr. Selam was experiencing something which is surprisingly a shock to him. The first thing that Abi surprised Dr. Selam is related to Abi's skill of opening which could be considered as cracking passworded computers. The password of Dr. Selam's computer did not restrict Abi to write the text which is read as:

Doctor, I can see you. You are worried about the breakup with your fiancée. Please help Netsanet and the language therapist. I will help you meet Kofi and William. I am Abi (p. 61).

This is a surprise to Dr. Selam, for this is the text that one could not normally expect from an autistic, right hand impaired child, and the one who cannot speak. Then Dr. Selam was worried about the matter. For one thing, he did not expect this discourse from the described child, and the other thing, he does not totally know the names of individuals mentioned in Abi's text. Later on,

Dr. Selam has remembered the name, Abi, through the mail that Abi sent Dr. Selam Previously though he did not give emphasis when Abi sent him the mail. One day, Dr. Selam has been encountered with the following unexpected mail from Abi, and it adds much more worries and shocks on the matter that Dr. Selam contemplates. However, as a discourse provided in magical realism, Abi states this magical discourse in the way Dr. Selam should take as simple and real. And as it has been mentioned frequently in this study, the way of presenting the very extraordinary narrative as a day-to-day narrative is considered as magical realism. The mail that Dr. Selam has come across is stated as follows:

They say I am autistic but when by that they mean incapable to communicate as the definition sometimes goes for that word, I know that I am not. I could see people's mind and read their memories. Well I know you will dismiss this as a false claim deserving no professional consideration; but I only need to meet you to prove it; hope that will happen soon... doctor you are wondering how I could do this, aren't you? I would have felt the same if I were in your place... (pp. 82-83).

In the extract above, the fantasy is presented from the first person point of view, in the way the narratee (Dr. Selam) is highly requested to take this unusual discourse as something which is experienced for real. This is the narrative that Dr. Selam can prove by getting Abi in person. Therefore, this is a feature of narrative which could be taken as an example for the postmodern notion of magical realism.

Then, Dr. Selam's surprise with Abi's skill of mind reading led him to get Abi in person, and he did. Their communication, the communication between Dr. Selam and Abi, has been carried out through writing with the help of computer. They share many things which surprise Dr. Selam in the way that the autistic kid is not for nothing gets the point of attention in international organizations. Dr. Selam has opportunities in which he sees the magical narratives that he went through into reality. It is because of these special talents that Abi is taken as the focal point of most of the narratives in the novel. Thus, Abi and Dr. Selam have been exchanging many fascinating discourses.

During their stay, Abi tells many things that are going on in the minds of other people to Dr. Selam, and these narratives surprise Dr. Selam. For example, Abi narrates about the worries in the mind of Tamene, one of the officials of the Dergue regime who did terrifying actions like red

terror. Abi further tells what is going on in the mind of his language therapist in the autistic centre to Dr. Selam. His language therapist worries a lot in the way that she thinks herself as impure creature because of her mother bore her from a priest. Therefore, she blames herself because she thinks that she is a creature created differently from the religious indoctrination that a priest is not allowed to have intercourse other than his wife. These and other similar stories are fascinated about the skill that Abi narrates to Dr. Selam.

In general, magical realism in relation to the skill that Abi has is related to situations as he is an autistic, right hand impaired and eight years old. Regardless of all these sanctions, Abi is able to read people's mind so that he is able to know everything what is going on in people's mind including the skill what people whom he is reading have. For example, as it has been indicated in the analysis before, he has learned basic computer skills from his mother when he was four years old. The ways he philosophizes things are not expected from an eight years old autistic child. In the introductory stages, all these skills Abi has are very surprising in the way that led Dr. Selam to sense as standing naked in a public square. However, these fantasies Abi has are presented in simple and ordinary way, so this is magical realism.

So far, magical realism has been dealt in relation to fantasy from the novel, *Eyes and Mist*. Similarly, the coming few pages are going to discuss fantasy in *Land of the Yellow Bull*. It could be good to discuss the following unexpected narrative which deals with the Hamar experience of throwing a child whom they expect unwanted. As they are described in the novel under discussion, this is totally contradictory from the very kind and humanitarian habit of the Hamar people. In the narratives of *Land of the Yellow Bull*, the Hamar people are presented as too kind, generous, sociable and lighthearted. However, there are situational ironies where the narrative elements that contradict to the traits mentioned above.

From these narrative elements, one is throwing a child whom they think is unwanted to the society. This is normally taken as totally inhumanitarian which could not be expected from this kind and convivial society. For example, the following extract tells the practice that the Hamar practised upon Kello during his childhood. Kello was considered as unwanted to the society. The Hamar elders were practising horrified incident upon him for the simple reason that his upper teeth grows first. As per the Hamar culture, growing the upper teeth before the lower one is

considered as bad luck. In the extract below, Kello narrates the story from first person point of view where he is telling the event which concerns him.

“The elders took me to a sheer cliff face and ordered me to stand in front of them with my back towards them. I tried to follow their orders, but I become impatient and turned to face them suddenly. I had barely turned when I saw one of them throwing his spear at my shoulders. The spear pierced my body and I groaned in great pain. They then pushed me down the abyss...” (p. 90).

The discourse is presented in a horrified extraordinary narrative. Taking the kind nature of the Hamar people as evidence, the above discourse has nothing to do with the Hamar people. However, as it is indicated in the extract, they especially the Hamar elders, practise this fantastic narrative upon an infant as a normal practice. This extraordinary narrative is taken as magical realism; as it has been discussed so far, magical realism under the notion of postmodernism, is considered as the very extraordinary event is presented in the normal practice of someone. Likewise, the Hamar people practise this and other similar disguised narratives reluctantly. These narratives or events are practised in the name of culture so that everybody takes the narrative as normal. For example, when the child was taken to be thrown into the cliff, except the family of the infant upon whom the aforementioned discourse is experienced, everything in the Hamar society was normal. The following extract could be taken as an evidence for this normalcy while this very horrified event has been experienced.

Despite our family shock, the whole family of Hamar was enjoying leisurely stroll in the sunset. The earth was red and the dry yellow mountainsides were waiting for the rain to start. Cows roamed freely and grazing anywhere they pleased, including along the paths. Kids were playing and laughing among their age mates. Nothing had changed as a result of my bad luck (p. 89).

Moreover, the Hamar elders use the slaughtered goat's intestine to predict any future event. The following extract tells something about the intestine test used for determining the future fate behind the proposed marriage of Delti and Charlotte. So, this is an extraordinary narrative for how one can determine the future of individuals with the intestine of a slaughtered animal. However, this fantastic event is presented in the way how extraordinary events are presented as magical realism, for the extraordinary event is presented in the way that people easily trust it.

This trust is developed not only in the minds of the local people, but also in the mind of Charlotte, the one who is from the so called civilized world, from England. She is worried about the result of the intestine examination. When the decision of the examiners is a little bit slow, Charlotte gets worried. She thinks that some sort of problem on her potential of motherhood is found. So it is surprising to see Charlotte is the one who will have a trust on the intestine test to be true. Her stream of consciousness on the intestine test goes in her mind as follows:

Oh, my God! They were suspecting me of being unable to bear children because they have seen me washing myself with water. Second, the intestine examiner and the shoe tosser had told the elders that I am unable to bear children. The rest is my own secret in that I take medical care to avoid unwanted pregnancy. I know that I cannot bear a child since I decided not to. They too seemed to conspire with each other against the bad fate. (pp. 185-186).

As indicated in the text above, Charlotte has been taken into the above stream of consciousness when the elders have taken a relatively long period of time to the intestine examination. For the ones out of the culture, this practice is hard to be taken true. Normally, there is not any actual connection with the intestine of the slaughtered animal with the very essence of the professed event. However, in the narrative, this practice is taken true. Since this fantasy is presented as normal narrative, it characterizes magical realism.

Furthermore, it is possible to add the following fantasy as magical realism. The narrative is related to the adventure that Charlotte has with Delti in the bushes. One may not expect Charlotte, the one who has had a love making experience with the 'comfortable' bedroom with lots of necessary logistics like shower, drinks, foods and et cetera, is going to be fascinated with love making experiences, i.e. naked bushes and trees. This experience is expected as the experience one expects in the most remote past. However, as per the narrative of the novel, it is totally different from the issue what is anticipated. As an adventure, Charlotte is very much fascinated with this practice in bushes and trees. She experiences it similar to the situation where comfortable bedroom with the aforementioned things are provided. After the Ivangadi dances, Charlotte goes together with Delti to the bush to make love. She loves this practice equivalently with her practice in comfortable bedrooms, probably better than that. Though the culture she came from might consider making love in bushes as the practice which may mark people

practising in the period of prehistory when they did not have a shelter other than bushes and trees, she loves this place with the very appropriate man, Delti, for her sexual desire. The following extract can elaborate this point of discussion better.

She looked as if she was going to her bedroom and not to a place in the forest she didn't know before. She found the forest was joyous and vibrant atmosphere. As she walked along the bush she saw the staring of her man...she was also surprised that all those who had seen her rush to the bush with Delti last evening never cared or dared to ask her about the incident... "What a civilized manner!" (pp. 115-116).

Under the notion of magical realism, the issue of the absence of jealousy in relation to the man to woman relationship is further explained to the extent of a woman is not jealous even when her husband is married to another woman as his second wife, third wife and etc. This idea is indicated in the extract below when Goity, the wife of Kello, is expecting Charlotte to be the second wife of her husband Kello. In the extract, Goity wishes Charlotte to be her husband's second wife so that Charlotte would be her assistant. So, this normal perception is something very extraordinary probably unheard in the so called the 'modern' world. In the modern world which could be taken as 'civilized', imagine how it would be irritating for a woman to see the situation where her husband is getting married with another woman as a second wife. As it has been discussed in the notion of postmodernism so far, this part of presentation in which the very odd narrative is presented as normal narrative makes a certain narrative magical realism. The following extract is taken as an example for this point of discussion.

... Goity arranged the fireplace, to boil coffee, while Charlotte brought wood for the fire. After observing what Charlotte was doing, Goity raised a suspicion. The more thought about it the more she got surprised. Even what she thought was true; it only means that Goity has got a helper- Goity suspected Charlotte Kello Horra's second wife (pp. 303-304).

From the sentence, 'even what she thought was true; it only means that Goity has got a helper', tells something there is not temptation of Goity to be jealous in having her husband, Kello, with Charlotte as his second wife. This is not normal to comprehend as a woman is in a position of considering her husband's wife as a helper. So, this fantastic narrative is presented as normal narrative, and this is an exemplary narrative for magical realism.

As long as *Borrowing Freedom* is one of the novels selected to the analysis and interpretation purpose of this study, the next discussions, related to fantasy as an element of magical realism, are fully made on this novel. In this novel, as it is slightly mentioned above, there are lots of fantastic narrative elements which could be treated under the concept of magical realism. This is made through the trait The Sage has in contrast to the traits that other characters have. The consideration of these fantasies about The Sage is related to the presentation of these extraordinary narratives as normal narratives to the extent that other characters normally understand The Sage is inborn to have.

For example, the following extract states the idea that Ashton has been told by her pseudo-father, Minister Donmuni, to kill The Sage. Minister, Donmuni whom she knows her father while he is not, told Ashton to kill The Sage by telling that The Sage is the killer of her mother. This deliberately fabricated information, together with her previous attachment with The Sage, makes Ashton to be more vicious to kill The sage. However, The Sage is not responsible for the death of her mother. Hence, she knows that The Sage is her close friend, not the killer of her mother. Surprisingly, she knows that The Sage is her biological father and the killer of her mother is Minister Donmuni himself. All these incidents have been conspired, for she was in dramatic irony. With all these dramatic ironies in mind, Ashton has been sent to kill The Sage.

While Ashton is trying to shoot The Sage, she sees some extraordinary happenings- magical realism. As a narrative presented through magical realism, she does not bother about the happening to the extent of the nature of the happening because of the trait she expects The Sage is inborn to have this trait. This part of magical realism is the postmodern sense of magical realism since the extra ordinary narrative is presented as a normal way of narrative. Magical realism under the notion of postmodernism is presented as normal narrative regardless of the fact that the issue is odd. When Ashton tries to shoot, The Sage multiplies himself into individuals in a meeting. This extraordinary narrative is stated as follows:

The two men in blue black outfits and fedora hats were walking down the justice street. There was no sign of haste or suspicion on their part. They were walking as though they were out on the street only to take a leisurely look at the lay of the ground around. "There is no doubt that one of them is The Sage, I know this is all your make and fabric. ... (p. 346).



Ashton is in confusion to identify the two identical individuals who resemble The Sage. It is something very difficult for someone to duplicate himself /herself unless it is in pictures. However, it is not surprising to Ashton as the text, “though I cannot yet have the full view of their faces..., I know this is all your make and fabric,” in the extract states. In turn, under the notion of postmodernism, presenting fantastic and unusual narrative as normal is considered as magical realism. In other words, the above extract has a postmodernist magical realism because an extraordinary narrative is presented in normal way of narration. The Sage is assumed to fabricate very extraordinary narratives as simple practice that he can easily do. And that is why Ashton simply takes this fantastic event as normal event that The Sage easily does.

In addition, Ashton has learnt the skill from The Sage enables her to make people unconscious and conscious and the vice versa as she wants. The extract below indicates the idea that Ashton is able to defend and to make the six Exjuleistic men unconscious. When they tried to kill Ashton and her friend, Ashton was able to defend them, and she made them unconscious. After a while, she turned them into a conscious mood.

As “a kill a day takes the opposition away” is their strategy, the Exjuleists have an operation of house-to-house killing which they technically call it H-to-H massaging or operation C. Six Exjuleistic men go to the house where Ashton and her friend, Neytai dwell. When the men come into the house, as everybody expects, Neytai, Ashton’s friend, is frightened, for she is with only Ashton. Though Ashton tries to advise her friend to have a trust on Ashton so that Ashton could defend any tackle whatever the problem might be serious; her friend is not easily convinced. In other words, because the situation everybody can expect is too horrific, her friend is not easily convinced to accept what is told to her. However, though Neytai has not expected the event to be concluded in the way Ashton tells her as follows:

“...you are but a tail the machine of crime wags.” Neytai spoke through her teeth.

“Haven’t you heard a saying that holds: better the head of an ant than the tail of an elephant? Still worse, you are the tail of a crime machine.” ...

Something happened to one of the men in such a way that he couldn’t tell if it really happened to him...

“Wha...wha...What a clean piece of performance that is!” ... “You killed them all?”...

“Don’t overrate me beyond my performances can warrant.” Ashton noted (p. 397).

In the extract above, one could not expect that the two women, Ashton and her friend Neytai, would be the winners over the well-armed six Exjuleist men. Everybody can think similarly what Neytai had assumed before the actual incident. However, the happening is ironically made as it is stated in the extract and the explanation before the extract. This happening is something extraordinary as Neytai expresses it with amazement. The text, “Wha...wha...What a clean piece of performance that is!” indicates the idea that Neytai could not believe what she had seen; nor could she tell certainly if she had seen it at all. This is so as “You killed them all?” in the extract above indicates. However, this extraordinary happening is considered normal by the performer, Ashton, as the text, “Do not overrate me beyond my performances can warrant”, in the extract indicates. Therefore, as it has been explained so far, this kind of presentation of the fantasy as normal narrative makes the narrative magical realism.

In addition, the extraordinary trait behind The Sage is developed to the extent of controlling what is going on in the minds and hearts of not only his friends, the protagonist characters like Agodo and Ashton but also his antagonist characters too. For example, the woman from the antagonist characters could not say something without associating it with the will of The Sage. Though other characters see it as normal and very minor so that she can easily forget things behind The Sage, she could not utter even a word without associating it with the will of him. This is practised as if it were her character mark.

The city administration woman takes the extraordinary trait that The Sage can manipulate what is going on in others' mind is normal. And this way of presenting the fantastic narrative as normal occurrences of life is considered to be a postmodernist presentation of magical realism. This is not the only thing that some of the antagonist characters expect The Sage is the one who can read and programme or adjust people's mind in the way he likes while other antagonist characters consider this trait as normal and nothing more than this. They think The Sage is inborn to have this trait. In turn, this is typically a postmodernist consideration of what 'magical realism' is meant.

The following extract taken from the novel, *The Thirteenth Sun*, could bring the notion of fantasy to its conclusion. In the extract, Goytom, one of the major characters in the novel under discussion, feels alone at Zikuala, for he has been worried about the way his country Ethiopia would develop. He is in a serious problem while he is contemplating about everything, and the

only means that enables him to rescue himself from the depression is the practice that he is immersed with the beauty of the natural environment he has dwelt. Though inherently naturally nature is attractive, he fantasises things magnificently considering nature as a solution for everything in the world. Therefore, concluding things boldly lacks some sort of modesty, and it is fantasised.

How beautiful it would be to pass your life observing the wild life of bees, birds and animals that live around you... it would be heaven, indeed, to live here- hunting for wild bees in trees; hunting for wild animals; and growing your own garden with all kinds of cabbages. Living like a hermit. Living life as free as the wind... you will have remedies for everything including ignorance... (pp. 112-13).

Though the environment in the countryside could be too attractive, it is not as attractive as the description made in the extract above. Everything in the extract is presented in a heavenly way. In other words, things are highly bragged like having remedies or solutions for ignorance too.

All the aforementioned explanations are not the only exemplary fantastic narratives reflected in the novels under study. For instance, narrating the father of the best preacher in Zikuala Abbo is a devil. In other words, people in the novel under the point think that sometimes the devil could be the potential father that can biologically bear individuals. As a result, the unusual trait they give to the preacher is a born of the devil, and that is why the other characters think that the preacher has a potential to go some 200 and 300 kilometers per day. In addition, the presentation of the devil as something which could be seen with our own naked eyes, while the devils are taking things that can lead us to laugh, and they are seen while they are dancing, farting and etcetera could be taken as examples of fantasy. Normally, as long as the devils are spirits, they are something individuals are visualizing, but it is fantasised as the descriptions mentioned, and the characters including Fitawrari Woldu, have accepted these descriptions without any hesitation. These presentations of the unbelievable things as the day-to-day narratives make magical realism. These are some of the examples taken as exemplary fantastic narrative features which could be considered as indicators of the big postmodern narrative feature- magical realism. The next part deals with another element of magical realism-defamiliarization.

### 5.1.2. Defamiliarization

Defamiliarization, as it has been discussed in the theoretical framework so far, deals with strange discourses. It is all about a making of unfamiliar discourses from the familiar ones. However, the defamiliarized narrative later is considered as normal which could be considered as the day-to-day narrative, and this part of understanding is considered as magical realism. One's attention is driven to give considerations while he/she is exposed to unusual presentation. Thus, the following pages are preoccupied with the discussion of some sample defamiliarized narratives.

The first defamiliarized feature of the novel, *Borrowing Freedom*, is related to the presence of the phrase, '**The Beginning**', at the end of the narrative in the novel. It is unnatural to get the phrase, "The Beginning" at the end of a certain text so that it could be considered as defamiliarization. Defamiliarization is not done for nothing; as a style defamiliarization should have its own literary relevance. Likewise, the utilization of the phrase, "The Beginning" in the novel, as it is indicated in the previous pages, has a literary relevance. This phrase may technically suggest the beginning of another narrative which is totally different from the previous narrative treated in the story. This, in turn, tells us another demanding narrative feature of postmodern intertextuality.

Similar to the above case, Ashton's real father, The Sage, has been written as 9gas. In other words the word "sage" is written as "9gas" for the presentation of dramatic irony (security purpose). All characters except The Sage who designed the matter in the story could not know the real name of Ashton's father. As it is presented on pages 579 and 580 of the novel, the puzzle behind 9gas is solved as "9", is considered as "e" in the mirror, and after realizing that "9" is "e", it will be written as egas. Finally, when the word "egas" is read from right to left, it will be "sage". This reading- reading from right to left is a defamiliarized presentation, for our reading as per the language-English in which the novel is written, is normally practised from left to right. Therefore, as it is indicated above, this defamiliarized narration is made for security purpose. It is achieved through dramatic irony where Ashton and some other characters are not clear with the matter.

In addition, the following defamiliarized narrative states the problem that the Exjuleistic leaders are supposed to solve. Mayor Exjule City Two provided the following concept as a problem that

he seeks his followers to solve. This is the idea which is not expected from leaders in any kind, (democrat, authoritative, monarchical, and etc).

We have heard of a story on how other countries suffer from budget deficit. Ours is however the worst in the deficit category in that it is an imprisonment deficit. We have had more prisons than prisoners. At present we are beset by the gravest reality in our life as Exjuleists. And that gravest reality is termed by us...as the bad shape of existence below imprisonment line. Other people in other parts of the world might be heard of failing to rescue themselves from slipping down into and below what they termed as the poverty line. What we can't so far do however is rescuing ourselves from slumping below the imprisonment line (p. 12).

So, it is not normal to see and hear such defamiliarized narratives from leaders. Whether they are successful or not, most leaders all over the world, developed country leaders or developing country leaders, are heard while they are talking a lot about economic development and issues related to development. However, leaders described in the extract above, are preoccupied with something different, probably a negatively related concept which may indicate how they are too autocratic, and as part of magical realism, this odd narrative is narrated as the day-to-day practices of leaders.

Moreover, the following defamiliarized narrative which deals with Ashton's experience with her elementary students could be included in the case in point. When Ashton asks her students to tell the sum of two previously asphalted and three other recently asphalted roads, to her, she experiences a defamiliarized concept. As it is stated pages from 17-23 of the novel, when she asks the students to tell the answer, the students respond:

“You have two kilometers of previously built asphalted road in use, and other three kilometers of asphalted road was recently constructed and went operational. Together how many kilometers of asphalted road do we have?”...

“Zero” a reverberating sound of many voices came to get on her ears. Before the impact of the roar was over, she heard another answer coming from a single student.

“Six and above.” It was the response from the son of Exjule City Two (p. 22).

Therefore, it is a defamiliarized concept to hear that three plus two is either zero, or six and above, and it is not beyond from the students level of understanding. As it is explained in the succeeding pages, all the students have their own reasons to say so. And this defamiliarized narrative has its own literary relevance so that it is taken as something normal. This, taking the defamiliarized narrative as familiar narrative, is what magical realism is meant.

By having their own justifications from their own backgrounds, all students responded accordingly. The son of the mayor has an experience of increasing numbers as he has learned from his official or politician father, Mayor Exjule City Two. He has an experience from his father while his father talks about any aspect of development. He increases any aspect of development where there is not any actual increment; whereas, other students have their own sarcastic reaction that roads could not be built by these corrupt Exjuleistic leaders. Students are expressing their own feelings with this defamiliarized way of narrative from their experiences.

Furthermore, it is possible to add the following defamiliarized narration as an additional sample. For example, the following dialogue between Mayor Litenen and minister Donmuni indicates the project they plan to do.

“I must tell you I am in the middle of implementing an Exjuleistic project. With my headquarters at the wooded knoll standing somehow equidistance between the two Exjule cities, I don’t have to tell you that I am working forty-eight hours a day to construct a road that will run through Exjule city two.”

“Forty-eight hours a day?” Mayor Litenen asked wondering if she had heard him.

“Yes forty-eight hours a day...” (p. 509).

From the extract above, the phrase ‘forty- eight hours in a day’ is unnatural to comprehend. It is conventionally known that a day is composed of twenty four-hours. Therefore, it is something defamiliarized to technically show that though he contributes nothing to the project, Minister Donmuni is happy to express his contribution which he expects huge. He wants to hide this deception to his boss, Mayor Litenen. In other words, he wants to say that he is pretending as he is the one who is working beyond what he is expected to do for the success of the project. This defamiliarized narrative is taken as normal narrative in the way that one of the interactants could not raise additional questions of unfamiliarity while the other interactant raises the issue of ‘forty-eight hours a day’. This is related to the notion of magical realism.

Similar to the above discussions from the novel, *Borrowing Freedom*, the following defamiliarized idea is boldly presented in the novel *Eyes and Mist* starting from the name of the author. As it has been stated in the introductory part of the analysis, the name of the author is written as “Tariku Abas Etenesh” where the surname, Etenesh, is made to be the name of his mother. This is not common to the Ethiopian naming style probably the world’s naming style. For that matter, writing his name and his father’s name could have been enough. However, in *Eyes and Mist*, the name of the author’s mother is written as a surname, and this is unusual to get such naming style.

The name of the female in the Ethiopian naming style is not culturally allowed to be used. This is applicable when the name of the father is not known. If not, as it has been indicated before, mostly this naming style or using female’s name as a father or surname in Ethiopia has structurally a negative connotation. Individuals using their mothers’ names instead of their fathers’ names for naming are less recognized by connoting either their fathers are not known, or they are labeled as ashamed of their fathers. Even when anyone’s father is not known, or if anyone is ashamed of his/her father for some reasons, he or she will use the name of his maternal grandfather, or the name of the individual who has had a contribution to the childhood period of the individual. Using mothers’ names in the naming style is less likely. Surprisingly, in the novel under discussion, the name of the author’s mother is made as if it were the name of his grandfather.

Likewise, the following consecutive defamiliarized narratives are reflected in the novel, *The Thirteenth Sun*. the defamiliarized narrative of *The Thirteenth Sun* starts with the title. As it has been explained in the introductory part of the analysis, the phrase “The Thirteenth Sun” is something unfamiliar that most of the world people could not be familiar with, for it is normally known that a year is composed of twelve months. It is something defamiliarized. However, it could be meaningful when it is associated with Ethiopian calendar so that it could be taken as normal narrative. This is what magical realism is.

In addition, in the same novel, it is possible to discuss the following defamiliarized narrative that Goytom has towards his half sister, Woynitu. The feeling Goytom has towards Woynitu does not seem a feeling that a brother could have towards his sister. Goytom’s feeling towards Woynitu is driven from the physical appearance/beauty that Woynitu has, and this is totally different from

the feeling that could normally be expected from one's biological brother who has a blood connection.

Surprisingly, Goytom considers her beauty as source of tourist attraction and a means of diplomacy through which his country will be developed. In some cases, he could not separate Woynitu from Ethiopia that Ethiopia will be developed when Woynitu will have proximity with international leaders and business men so that Woynitu's beauty will be source of attraction to these people who will provide some contributions to Ethiopian economy. Goytom has two strategies in which he can make his country Ethiopia a developed nation. These strategies are replacing the old social, political, religious, and economic structures with the new ones and the other demanding, probably his better strategy (taking his feeling for granted), is using Woynitu's physical delicacy and charisma as a strategy of development. The following extensive extract taken from the novel under discussion may better describe this argument.

She could be an asset, I know. If she went to one of those conferences and simply sat in one of spacious halls. The cynosure of all eyes-the big men's eyes-she will become. Beautiful Woynitu. She will then help her mother- her country... they will raise their hands in consent whenever a meeting is suggested to be held in Addis Ababa. They will raise their hands... And all those beautiful cars they ride in when they come to visit us. Cars all varieties. From all over the world. They will ride in those beautiful cars. And the chauffeurs will always be ready to show them out- of -the -way places. All those big men. They will feel like Gods with their pockets full of money... And Woynitu attracting tourist and all that... (pp. 30-31).

The fragments taken as sentences in the extract above may technically show that the strong feeling Goytom has towards his sister's, Woynitu's, beauty which leads him to be eager to use as a strategy through which his country, Ethiopia, will be the attention of the globe at large. Therefore, this is something strange, for it could not normally be known such a brotherly feeling. The love that brothers have towards their sisters is not driven to the physical beauty that their sisters have. The feeling what Goytom has is something similar to sexual love which is not expected from a brother whose blood line is immediately close to her; she is his sister.

All in all, the aforementioned defamiliarized narratives discussed are not the only defamiliarized narratives treated in the novels under study. These are attempts made to indicate some samples



for the defamiliarized narrative features reflected in the novels. The next consecutive pages are related to the discussion of another element of magical realism-irony.

### **5.1.3. Irony**

Irony is a situation that may end up in quite a different way than what is generally anticipated. In simple words, it is a difference between the appearance and the reality behind this appearance. Therefore, this section will deal with the different discrepancies in the narrative process of the novels. However, irony under the notion of magical realism is related to the presentation of the discrepancies of things, events and ideas without creating astonishment which could be resulted from the discrepancies. In other words, the ironical discrepancies under the notion of magical realism are taken as normal engagements. Thus, the different types of ironies, as they have been discussed in the theoretical framework, situational irony, verbal irony and dramatic irony are going to be discussed.

In addition, black humour will also be discussed. Black humour is the concept of treating the miserable actions in easier and euphemistic form in which full of fantasies are included. So, this section is all about sarcastic narrations made in the narrative process of the novels. As it is slightly indicated in the introductory part of the analysis, the novels are composed of plot structures with lots of ironies.

#### **5.1.3.1. Situational Irony**

In the novel, *Borrowing Freedom*, the Exjuleistic leaders want to build a court for the purpose of imprisoning number of prisoners. It has been explained under the section which deals with defamiliarization that Exjuleists consider the absence of prisoners as a problem. So, they want to build a court as an institution in which the corrupt Exjuleistic leaders label all wrongly accused individuals as criminals and to declare death sentences by the ironically named corrupt judge (Father of Justice). The Exjuleists do this practice for solving their problem of ‘imprisonment deficit’ and to waste time. The perception of Exjules about a court is indicated by Father of Justice, the corrupt judge. For example, the following ironical narrative is expressed when father of justice avails himself while he is there to judge Agodo’s case. The extract goes as follows:

I am here to see to it that your journey to your grave moon will be expedited at all costs. Till then we can waste our time inside this efficient machine, endearingly called a court, a machine ever invented by human beings to waste time... (pp. 274-275).

It is totally contradictory to the very essence of court which is usually institutionalized to ensure justice. However, the Exjuleistic judge has a perception which has nothing to do with the very essence of court as his name, Father of Justice, has nothing to do with his actual practice in the name of justice. Father of justice is doing things in contradictory ways in the institution where he practices their theory of prison increment and putting, the strategy of ‘a kill a day keeps the opposition away’, into practice. This is an exemplary concept for situational irony; since, court is normally institutionalized to ensure justice, and it has nothing to do with Exjuleistic practices.

The next excerpt is raised under situational irony is related to the ballot box robbers whom the Exjuleist leaders name ‘Ballot Box Switching Engineers’. These ballot box switching engineers have been sent to Europe for further education (for their second degree education). The assumption of the Exjuleistic leaders while they were sending the ballot box switching engineering was making them more professionals in ballot box switching. However, what the Exjules experience from their ballot box switchers after their return from Europe is totally different from their expectation. Though the Exjuleists have expected the ballot box switchers to come being more professional ballot box switchers, the switchers come with the concept of “Fair and Free Election”. This has nothing to do with the political philosophy of the Exjuleist leaders in Ajeebuax. Surprisingly, the former ballot box switchers are very much surprised with having their leaders in power with their similar political philosophy-with Exjuleism. The switching engineers have come to their home with the ideology totally different from their former bosses’ expectations.

The idea is made clear when all former seventeen ballot box switching engineers have visited the office of their former boss, Chebodi. When they get him with the same ideology, they are very much surprised. They are joking at him to the extent of Chebodi became mad so that he let them off from his office by commanding his loyal guards. He does not have patience to listen to what his former ballot box switching engineers are saying. He never knew them in this way before. He knew them while they were active in their ballot box switching. However, what he is experiencing from them while they are dealing with issues in relation to free, fair and democratic election is far from Exjuleists perception. However, though this incident is normally very extraordinary, as magical realism employed in the narrative, Chebodi accepts this with, not much more hesitations to accept.

Chebodi was irritated for the matter what happened to his former loyal ballot box switching engineers. He knew them while they were doing things in the way Chebodi liked. They were the engineers of the pseudo-election that the Exjuleistic leaders carried out. However, the ballot-box switching engineers are practising things different from what they practised before their experience to the outside world. Let alone continuing in the previous way they even do not have a positive intention towards their former leaders. Therefore, it is an exemplary narrative for situational irony, for the ex-ballot box switching engineers got a scholarship with their contribution in switching come with a negative idea to the system that let them be educated-they came back being unfaithful to the system that letted them be educated.

The other situational irony is related to Minister Donmuni's messengers who were sent to kill The Sage. At the end, they came back to Donmuni being The Sage's friend. They are loyal to The Sage. This is made as it has been discussed under magical realism, by the special skill The Sage has. First, Minister Donmuni sent Ashton to kill The Sage by wrongly telling her that The Sage is the killer of Ashton's mother. However, Ashton becomes a close person to The Sage, and the enemy of Minister Donmuni. After the failure of his project by Ashton, Donmuni sent his son, Revorat, to kill both The Sage and Ashton. Still The Sage caught Revorat and treated him to the extent of Revorat is in a position of loving and appreciating The Sage. The following extract would be a supportive discourse to how Revorat loves and appreciates The Sage. Though he was sent by his father to kill The Sage, Revorat came back being the friend of The Sage.

“I would say, The Sage is out there to show to the world that peace can be made, reconciliation achieved, apology offered and forgiveness harvested even with tools that are otherwise the most dependable gadgets in the business of blood- shedding?” It was not just a question, though it might sound one. It was a statement made in confession (p. 554).

Moreover, Exjuleistic leaders have projects related to the provision of traffic lights in the two Exjule cities-Exjule City One and Exjule City Two. However, there is not electricity at all where the leaders are in a situation of providing traffic lights. Surprisingly, there are not vehicles except one or two tractors of The Sage near Exjule City One. Therefore, it is an exemplary narrative for situational irony, for one could not have the intention of having traffic lights where there is no electricity and no vehicle as well.

Furthermore, it is possible to discuss other situational ironies related to The Sage's practice at the school where kids are learning. From the very beginning, the school has been established with the initiation and financial contributions of The Sage himself. However, though the school has been established and financed by The Sage, Exjuleistic leaders evacuate him from the school for the simple reason that The Sage is not okay to teach the kids as per the political philosophy of these dictators, Exjuleistic leaders. Ironically, though The Sage is not allowed to teach in the school where he has founded, he does not quit financing the school. As part of narratives provided through magical realism, all these ironies are presented in normal narration in which questions are not raised.

Similar to the above consecutive discussions related to situational irony in *Borrowing Freedom*, the following are some of the sample situational ironies reflected in *Eyes and Mist*. Kofi in the following extract is surprised to see the celebration of victory of Adwa by the white people in their own country. Practically, he takes Adwa as a victory of black people and of humanity at large against injustice and inhumanity resulted from the so called civilized whites. Having this situation in mind, Kofi is very much surprised to see the whites while they are celebrating Adwa. Kofi thinks that Adwa is a war which shows the whites' defeat, failure, injustice and the fake behind the whites' civilization.

For Kofi, Adwa has a unique significance among many in the history of anti-colonial resistances and wars. It stands out as a victory of not only black people, but also of humanity as it had defogged the mist that blinded the so called civilized world and gave hope for the suffering of the colonized in Africa and around the world. If it were not for moments like Adwa, the 'civilized world' could have sustained its rhetoric of justifying injustice... 'What a surprise to see the white professor celebrating a battle where the whites were defeated,' Kofi joked... (p. 148).

Though having whites to be fascinated in the victory of Adwa as something is magical, for Adwa is a battle field which discloses the beginning of interrogations against the whites' supremacy over the blacks, it will have a chance to be real. In other words, though the above narrative is taken as something unusual to Kofi, it is not that much surprising if it is considered outside of categorical thinking. From the very beginning, the war of Adwa is a symbol of victory against injustice, labeling all whites in similar way is also something which could lead us into irony.

Therefore, there might have been lots of white individuals who could stand in favour of the blacks so that the whites can celebrate Adwa equivalently as the blacks do. Therefore, though the celebration of Adwa by the whites is somehow magical and at the same time, it is something which could be taken as normal which could be practised daily. This in turn, is indicated by the narrator's reporting phrase, 'Kofi joked', in the extract above. This is what magical realism is, for it is all about the presentation of unusual events in normal way of presentation.

In addition, it is good to discuss the narrative below related to Abi's teacher, the language therapist. Though his teacher is expected to teach him language so that he can communicate with the others, she has a problem of communication. The following extract tells the idea that the language therapist who is expected to be Abi's teacher has her own language and communication problems.

But for me it was hilarious to find someone like my language therapist trying to teach me the very thing she was not able to do. She wanted to teach me how to communicate and if possible how to talk, when she, along with the rest of her likes was practically impaired in this regard. She had problems of speaking her mind. She had this marked meekness that she always maintained toward me despite the hush and bluntness of interest she has had towards others... (p. 261).

The case works true for Dr. Selam too. From the very beginning, Dr. Selam is a psychiatrist who is sympathetic to help Abi, the wrongly labeled autistic who could not communicate with people. Dr. Selam first tries to help Abi. However, things are not gone in the way Dr. Selam expects. First, Dr. Selam goes mad with the unexpected talent he has seen in Abi. As it has been discussed in the previous pages so far, Abi sent unbelievable mails to Dr. Selam, and Dr. Selam was not in a position of finding Abi in person for some months so that he was worried a lot about the matter.

Coupled with the confusion, Dr. Selam had a betrayal from his fiance, and cumulatively, Dr. Selam has come to need a psychiatrist. This is a typical narrative which shows us situational irony. It is all about getting the psychiatrist who needs a psychiatrist. However, this magical narrative is taken to be true for the magic is resulted from other external factors as they are described above. This is an example of magical realism in the situation where the need for a psychiatrist for psychiatrist is normally narrated in the novel as a day-to-day experience. The

same is true for Abi's language therapist. She is a language therapist who is supposed to help people with a problem in communication; while, she herself has a problem in communication.

Moreover, the following extract deals with a situational irony in which Abi states the idea that the letter that his mother sent to Tamene, the politician who participated in red terror during the Dergue Regime in Ethiopia. This is achieved through his skill of mind reading, reading Tamene's mind. In the narrative in the extract below, one could be exposed to the story that Tamene killed Abi's maternal grandparents during the red terror, and this led Tamene to have a mental agony. Abi's mother was born while her mother was killed in the torture that Tamene made upon her mother. Though lots of tortures had been made upon Abi's grandmother, Abi's mother was born safe during the torture.

Regardless of knowing the above mentioned miserable situation made upon her parents, Abi's mother does not want to avenge Tamene; rather, she wants to show this to him with love. Therefore, she does things which could not be normally expected to be. Abi's mother love Tamene's children, and surprisingly, she wanted to marry Tamene's son, and she bore Abi from Tamene's son though Tamene did not know that before his exposure to the letter she has sent him. The extract placed below is taken from the epistolary narrative stated in the novel, and it is described as follows:

...I am preparing to live the future with my child fathered by your son. Surprised? Don't be. I am pregnant from your son and I did that intentionally. This is the seed of my absolution for the blindness of your actions yesterday. No matter how you have wanted my life to be swept by the flashflood of hatred, I have asked WHY and I have chosen to win by love than to revenge by hatred. (pp. 248-49).

As it has been described in the extract above, the narrative is not expected to be in the narrative as expressed above. One could not easily want to marry a man whose father is the killer of the parents of the one who want to marry. However, Abi's mother is in a position having a son-Abi from a man whose father is the killer of her parents, and this narrative is normally presented as the sentence, 'I am preparing to live the future with my child fathered by your son. Surprised? Do not be,' in the extract above, implies. Readers are not expected to be surprised; rather as the sentence "Surprised? Do not be." implies, readers are requested to take this narrative as normal. And the way presenting the very extraordinary narrative as easy and normal is considered as

magical realism. Therefore, the narrative stated above, is an exemplary narrative for magical realism. It is unnatural to see one while she is to be the wife of a man whose father killed her parents.

The following idea from the novel, *The Thirteenth Sun*, can bring the discussion of situational irony into conclusion. Goytom is the son of the fitawrari, the one from the nobility-upper class. As compared to the other members in the society, Goytom is the one who could have led a best life, since he is from a family of the upper class. However, it may be resulted from his educational background and the brutality, power seeker and money oriented characters of his father, Fitawrari Woldu, Goytom becomes against the system that his father is proud of. Therefore, taking his family background, Goytom is expected to be for the system that his father and his likes have structured, but Goytom is the one who is working day and night to make a new system that can strike the old one off. The following extract from the novel, *The Thirteenth Sun*, describes this point of argument as:

Yes! Yes! I sacrifice the things in hand for the good of the hypothetical whole. I believe in the tongue instead of the fist. And how I shout! We must start from the practical bottom and work up! Not from the theoretical top and tumble down. The old traditions must be smashed! New ones must be created! We must forge a whole new pattern for Ethiopia. Must have faith in the human soul. Must-must-must... (p. 114).

These all attempts made so far are not the only situational ironies in the novels. These are only some sample situational ironies raised to show from the many situational ironies reflected in the novels. The next section deals with some exemplary narratives related to dramatic ironies.

### **5.1.3.2. Dramatic Irony**

Dramatic irony, as it has been discussed in the theoretical framework, is a situation in which the audiences are informed about something of the characters especially of protagonist characters while the characters themselves are not clear with the issue that concerns them. Similarly, most of the dramatic ironies in the novel, *Borrowing Freedom*, are related to Ashton, one of the protagonist characters. In the text, Ashton understands the idea that Minister Donmuni is her actual father. That is why she has easily been convinced by Minister Donmuni to kill The Sage. Donmuni told Ashton that he is her father, and The Sage is the killer of her mother whom Ashton does not know at all. Ashton's mother was murdered during Ashton's infancy. Donmuni told

Ashton that the killer is The Sage so that Ashton should avenge The Sage. The following extract from, *Borrowing Freedom*, proves this argument.

I would say my dearest lone heroine. Minister Donmuni's voice was an audible testimony to the tearfulness that befell him. Yes, it is The Sage that denied me the ethereal love only your mother is blessed with in this life and on this land...The Sage heartlessly made me part for good with your mother who is the mellow nexus of love possible to human beings. The Sage blotted out the horizon of my life, the azure of my destiny, the zenith of my being, which your mother was. In his unscrupulous and yet well mediated murderous puff The Sage blew out the light of my purpose in life, which your mother was... (p. 320).

After hearing this irritating story behind the death of her mother, Ashton is highly convinced that she is vicious to snatch the life of The Sage. She began to develop a sense of jealousy to see The Sage alive. She was in deep dramatic irony, for she does not know the conspiracy behind Minister Donmuni's fabricated narrative. However, taking Ashton for granted, the reality, as it is known to her at the end of the story is totally different from what is told to her. And this is what magical realism is, for the fabricated narrative is taken as real. At the end of the narrative, she becomes clear with the ideas that The Sage is her actual father, and Minister Donmuni is the killer of her mother. The story is deliberately reversed to her. Regardless of this reality and regardless of her close attachment with The Sage before she is exposed to this fabricated story by Minister Donmuni, Ashton is too irritated and she does not listen something other than killing The Sage.

Did I hear myself earlier say that there is no parallel to the way he played the fool with me? I was conceivably wrong to take his malevolent steps that way. As a matter of fact, he didn't play the fool with me. It takes a quality to be played the fool with. I don't even have that quality. Fact be admitted, in the eyes of The Sage I don't have the least quality to meet his weird requirements. I don't qualify to be the object of his foul plays, stinky games, and bloody moves... I will throw him a challenge in his own backyard and see him perish into noneity (pp.323-336).

The other situation in which dramatic irony experienced in the novel is related to the situation where Ashton made the fake upon some Exjuleistic men. When some men were arrested by



Ashton, some other Exjuleists were nearer to the area. During this situation, the men from outside are in dramatic irony so that they are not okay to help the men whose fate is determined by Ashton's interest. In this case, though the men who are in the house had said a lot to get help from their comrades outside, Ashton makes a trick on the men who are outside. She did this telling their common password known only by Exjuleists so that the people from outside consider Ashton is their person. Though the unit leader inside has said a lot to tell that Ashton is a liar, the people inside are considered as traitors to Exjuleism. The extract below may better describe the point of discussion.

“...don't listen to her she is lying!” The unit leader bellowed his protestation on top of his lungs.

‘In case you doubt even a shade what I have been telling you, perhaps the contingency password *Ashton tryzae* could clear all the demur of cloud circling in the sky of you belief.’

“She is lying comrades.”

“The password never lies.” One of the silhouettes nodded appreciation for Ashton... (p. 407).

Similar to the previous discussions related to dramatic irony in the novel, *Borrowing Freedom*, the following discussion is related to this issue in *Land of the Yellow Bull*. The following extract deals with the idea Kello experienced is an indication behind the irony especially the verbal irony that mankind can experience things resulted from culture and social contracts. Therefore, in the extract below, there is the experience of dissatisfaction in Kello's life for the simple reason that leading such life is his culture. He is practising this life while he does not love to lead such miserable life. We take this as magical realism which is expressed as verbal irony. Kello is leading this miserable life resulted from his culture which is believed that Kello loves because it is his culture. Therefore, the life Kello expects to be, and the actual life engagement he is leading, are totally different. In simple terms, Kello is not in a position of leading the life that nature allows him to enjoy life. The cultural constraints resulted from his cultural law do not allow him to do so. The extract from the novel, *Land of the Yellow Bull*, describes this point of discussion.

Whenever Kello thought about approaching a woman to whom he was attracted with the compounds of the university or outside, he was discouraged by the prevailing cultural constraints. And when he thought about using his birthright, like a cock, there is tradition and the law threatening him with sanction. He was therefore unhappy. Instead of putting nature under natural laws he was bound with the chains of traditional rules that have been passed from one generation to another. This made his life to lack spicy satisfaction and to face sour alternatives (p.44).

In addition, under the notion of magical realism, the following narrative discusses how the local people mentioned in the story (the Tsemay and the Hamar people) and the outsiders especially the westerners viewed each other. As it is treated in the mind and heart of Charlotte, here in the extract below, there are dramatic ironies that the local people and the westerners viewed each other.

In the Tsemay people are characterized with amazing or extraordinary narrative in which their mind style is systematically depicted as Charlotte too is characterized in similar way. As it is indicated in the extract, the Tsemay, or the local people are very much surprised to see individuals who are not able to speak the Tsemay language while their language and culture cumulatively is considered “inferior”. As it has been discussed so far, though the outside world especially the western world considered them ‘inferior’, the Tsemay and other similar people around the world have a different view. The Tsemay are very much surprised to see individuals lacking a skill of speaking the Tsemay language. These people think their language is spoken all over the world, while it is practically considered “inferior”.

On the other hand, they know that the ‘Ferengis’-the white people are by far better than them in some other areas, like the production of medicine. I think the relatively extensive extract below may better describe all these issues in relation to the mind style of the local-the Tsemay people. As a postmodern text, the narrative in the extract is made in magical realism where very extraordinary elements are loaded as normal. Hereunder is the extensive extract.

“Who is she?” they laughed and turned to each other with surprise. Someone among the crowd whispered something. “Well I don’t want to bother you anymore. She is ferengi!” “Ferengi! Oh!” the crowd were chanting the word and held their mouths in amazement. “Oh if she is a ferengi, she might have the bullet-shaped medicine which exchange for goats and honey from the merchants.” ... “It is a miracle! Emm! You see that there are people on earth who don’t speak Tsemay language...oh how we can trust them –they seem to be joking?” Charlotte missed everything and found herself among black and naked natives near cattle kraals... (pp. 66-69).

The excerpt reveals the idea the narrative in relation to the two cultural extremes- the Tsemay culture and the western culture viewed each other. The narrative is presented in ironies where one is highly astonished with the other and the vice versa. In turn, this is taken as magical realism, for extraordinary narrative elements are presented as normal narratives.

The following extract from the novel, *The Thirteenth Sun*, can bring the discussion on dramatic irony into its conclusion. This is related to the problem that Goytom encounters in relation to begging. Wherever Goytom goes, he gets beggars, and the dramatic irony is related to the beggars who consider themselves as if they were educated. In the narratives, we can get the so called educated ones who use their English as a means of empathy receiving as, “what a surprise they are begging while they are the educated ones!” In this case, the sarcastic that Goytom mocks at their English indicates that the dramatic irony in which readers are informed about the fake behind their education, while they are considering themselves as if they are the educated ones. It is revealed through the English they are speaking. The extract placed below is the sarcastic narrative upon the so called educated beggars.

“Brother, brother! Look here, brother!” One of them will address you. Amazed and a bit frightened, you stop to inquire what the matter is. And he will come to you, “Look brother,” he will say, “I have not eat yesterday, today also. I am not ask you for much money; just give fifty cent now...!” A civilized beggar who would determine for you how much to give him... (p. 18).

Having described some exemplary discussions on dramatic irony as the discussion which has been dealt in the previous consecutive pages, the next section discusses some points on the third category of irony-verbal irony.

### 5.1.3.3. Verbal Irony

As it has been discussed in the theoretical framework, verbal irony in simple terms is considered as a situation where discrepancy between what is deeprooted in the minds and hearts of characters and their actual practices and sayings. For example, in the novel, *Borrowing Freedom*, the extract below raises the narratives that Minister Donmuni tells Ashton as he is her father, and the killer of her mother is The Sage. When this issue is considered from Ashton's perspective, it is dramatic irony; whereas, when it is considered from Donmuni's point of view, it is verbal irony. Minister Donmuni is telling Ashton this and that while he knows the things are not in the way he is telling to her. In other words, Donmuni is telling Ashton as he is her father, and the killer of her mother is The Sage while he knows that he is the killer of her mother, and Ashton's father is The Sage.

In addition, it is possible to take the idea of the leader of that country, Ajeebuax, Chebodi where he is talking to his people probably his subjects about the all rounded 'development aspects' he has made under his leadership. He talks a lot about the development that he achieved to Ajeebuax; while, he knows that there is no development at all in that country. He knows that the country to which he is shouting is his pseudo-development in that country. To this effect, even the speaker Chebodi himself is surprised when he sees the twenty years old stadium which is full of mosses and lichens.

I take this moment of greatness to break to you the world's most treasured news that only farm democracy can afford to make happen... it is a phenomenon that makes all legends about legendary deeds stow themselves into densities of shame in the archives of embarrassment. It is a glory of the contemporary age, which reduces the shining giants of the past into gleaming dots of prehistory. Chebodi has stop for effect. Before he resumed his speech his eyes took a passionate look at the twenty or so years old corner stone of cyber stadium. He had to struggle to cut back his unsolicited laughter at the sight of mosses and lichens swathing the corner stone (p. 493).

As it is inferred from the extract, especially the sentence: "He had to struggle to cut back his unsolicited laughter at the sight of mosses and lichens swathing the corner stone", verbal irony is systematically reflected. Chebodi is referring development and development related concepts while he practically knows that there is no development. Let alone development to the extent of

the development Chebodi refers; even there is no concern even to do very simple things like keeping the previously constructed stadium clean and attractive.

Moreover, it is possible to add some verbal ironies extracted from the novel, *Eyes and Mist*. The following extract deals with the verbal irony that people expect their life to be and the different actual happening of their expectation. The irony behind the situation is hidden with the fear, the dishonesty behind their mind and other similar reasons that they do not want to deal with because of their religious and cultural grounds. The extract describes this idea b. Taking Abi as an external focalizer who will take one into the minds and heart of individuals that Abi has read for granted, the point of discussion in relation to verbal irony is vividly described in the excerpt below.

“The people I lived with including my mother, my grandmother, my teachers, and other people who, in one way or the other, I came closer with, live a life of mismatch, between what they want to be and what they actually are and they do it willfully. This seems to be an accepted way of life that most of you have acknowledged. I see a dedication to defy the true position they have about themselves, defy their true wish and hide in fear and in so doing live a determined life of blindfolding themselves from rationality...” (pp. 82-83).

In the extract above, with the expressions, “defy their true wish and hide in fear and in so doing live a determined life of blindfolding themselves from rationality”, is related to the verbal irony in which people deliberately hide the discrepancies between the thought and the corresponding different happenings. And this irony is taken as normal, as the expression, “This seems to be an accepted way of life that most of you have acknowledged,” in the extract above, relates to the presentation of unusual happening as accepted experience. This is what magical realism is. After having seen irony in relation to its different categories, the last issue in relation to irony under the big umbrella of magical realism is related to the discussion of black humour.

#### **5.1.4. Black Humour**

Black humour is a concept which refers to the presentation of unpleasant situations in a fantastic mood. This fantasy reduces the tension which could be developed in the minds and hearts of audiences. The following discussions are taken as exemplary narratives for black humour reflected in the novels. For example, in the novel, *Borrowing Freedom*, Mayor Exjule City Two

created the following humorous situation when he was sentenced to ten years of imprisonment. When he received ten years of imprisonment, he tried to create a means in which he will make himself free. He came with the idea of “Imprisonment Productivity”. Imprisonment productivity is a concept which refers to imprisoning many if possible or some if not for relatively short period of time than imprisoning one individual for a relatively long period of time. Likewise, Mayor Exjule City Two wanted to shift his ten years imprisonment to ten days imprisonment of his party members as follows:

“So I need only three hundred and sixty five comrades volunteering for the successful accomplishment of the task that the concept of imprisonment productivity.” All volunteered and jostled their way to get their names written down in the new page of history Exjule touted imprisonment productivity (p. 137).

The above extract clearly indicates that the people are happy to take the bad situations of their boss. They are quick to get their names registered. This is the fascinating part of the narrative. However, the following extract shows that the situation is hard to them. Though they were happy to put the concept of imprisonment productivity into practice, they later sense that the situation as it goes below is bad.

“If my imprisonment is your imprisonment, which I know deep in my marrow to be so, you are...the three hundred sixty five of you are... going to be imprisoned for me.” He expected another round of thunderclap. He was wrong. There was none. What he faced instead was something hard hit by the thunderstorm itself. He looked in disbelief at the participants of the general assembly and felt that he saw stranded and miserable victims of a relentless thunderstorm. “Let me now go straight to the modality of your imprisonment for me.” He felt that he was addressing a dead congregation of lifeless people. He could see that they had stopped even drinking their wines (p. 138).

In addition, the following sarcastic narrative is some addition exemplary narrative for ‘black humour’. The extract deals with Chebodi’s reaction to the international journalist when the journalist asked him to react on the economic development of his country, Ajeebuax. As it is consecutively stated in the text, the economy of Ajeebuax is in a bad situation where there is not any indicator of development. The problem of poverty in Ajeebuax is to the extent of Agodo termed as “terrorism”. As Agodo describes the idea vividly, it is because of this severing poverty

experienced in Ajeebuax where the poorest pays the highest and lives the least where the reverse is true for the leader and the richest. This is the idea which is the reason for the plot development of the narrative in the novel at large. Regardless of this situation of poverty in Ajeebuax, Chebodi, the leader of this country, talks a lot about his pseudo-development. His speech can lead us to laughter. The reality behind this country's economy is too harsh. As it is expressed in Agodo's magazine entitled with "The No nos Noble: Borrowing Freedom", poverty in Ajeebuax is considered as a terrorist where 99% of the population is engulfed with. Leaving this bad situation aside, Chebodi is talking a lot about the development of the country as if it were interesting.

"As health as any economy that grows in three digits."

"Did I hear you Mr. Chebodi say your economy is growing in three digits?"

"You heard me right this time."

"Do you mean it grows in two digits?"

"I leave that for economies of Philippines, Ethiopia, Singapore, Indonesia, Brazil, Botswana, you name it. They all claim it... so we decided to leave it all back to them and moved up to three digit growth rate. No one stops us from growing in three digits" (p. 307).

Moreover, the following extract from the novel, *Eyes and Mist*, explains the idea of black humour in detail. In the extract below, high school students, Selam and Fitsum (the later psychiatrist and the journalist respectively) were in a problem to fulfill the sport session outfits because of their incapability probably poorness. Therefore, these students come with their own means. Selam came with his father's trousers turned to shorts; while, Fitsum came with white shorts similar to white underwear. Naturally, the situation is sympathetic that one can feel to the children. They came in this way, for they and their parents' economy could not afford to do so. However, our sympathetic sense is changed into laughing though the very essence of the situation could lead the children (Selam and Fitsum) into tears. That is why this narrative is taken as an example for black humour in which the children's sorrow is taken as the source of others' laughter. The actual extract below may better describe this point of discussion.

“What are you two wearing?” the teacher shouted loud...

“It is under wear!” a known voice came out louder followed by the whole gathering bursting out laughing. Both Fitsum and Selam knew what voice; it was the voice of Walel; a self proclaimed comedian gangster of their class .... Immediately after the outburst of laughter and jeers, a girl, who was standing Johnny’s specialty was making fun of anything that could give him the attention that he always seemed next to Fitsum swapped her position with another classmate as if ashamed of standing next to him. ‘Don’t be afraid, he is only in underwear, not in a bedroom,’ Walel threw his sarcastic lines, triggering another wave of laughter... (p. 173).

As it is clearly depicted in the extract above, Fitsum the one who was considered as a source of laughter and mockery is changed into to be a centre of attention that everybody wants to imitate his actions ironically can trace us back to one typical feature of postmodern notion. This is directly related to the very big idea of postmodernism, ‘centres may be the decentre’.

The following dialogue between the wives of officials from the novel, *The Thirteenth Sun*, can bring the discussion of black humour into conclusion. The extract deals with the issue that the husband of the woman, or the official, has been released free from his crime arrested. He is made free not because he did not kill a person but he is free because of the eye witness does not able to tell the exact number of bullets that the official has used for killing a person.

It is funny to judge individuals not by the very nature of the crime but by the number of bullets or the amount of energy they exert to practise the crime. Therefore, the bad side of the narrative in the following extract is related to having a criminal free of his crime not because of the crime he has committed is pity; rather, it is because of some sort of trick he has mad because of the power he is appointed.

Surprisingly, people who are called for the testimony are made to be criminals not because they are dishonest; rather, because they are not sure about the number of bullets the official has used while killing the man. And it is also very funny to make the people with the testimony criminals while the guilt official is make free of the crime he has committed.



“I have heard so many versions of the incident I don’t know which one to believe...?”

“Three of them are now serving time for two years.”

“For falsifying the truth?”

“That is right. And two of them ran to the countryside and are being hunted still.”

“But tell me truly, isn’t not a fact that your friend killed the man?”

“He might have killed him, but not with five bullets.”... (p. 125).

So far, fantasy, ironical, defamiliarized and black humourous narratives have been presented as normal and day-to-day realities. This typically characterizes the postmodern notion of magical realism. Magical realism, as it has frequently been discussed, is the notion of presenting unusual narratives as usual narratives. Likewise, the next part of this chapter discusses metafiction.

## 5.2. Metafiction

Metafiction is a type of narration in postmodern fictions in which readers are coming to be aware of the fictitious feature of the story they are reading. Readers feel that they are being told a certain story than experience the story as a real life experience of human beings. Therefore, the following extracts will discuss this issue in the novels. For example, in the novel, *Borrowing Freedom*, the following extract which deals with the fake behind Exjuleism by one of the fans of Exijulism could be discussed. This is made when mayor Litenen asked them to tell what they feel about their own system. This is the idea which could be taken an example of metafiction, for it is an extract which deals with the fake behind Exjuleism by Exjuleism. Thus, the extract below is spoken by one Exjuleist while he is given a chance to speak about Exjuleism.

“We are four times removed from reality... The first time we lie to ourselves as individuals. The second time we lie to eachother as party members or general assembly members or assistance of the mayor that is you-Litenen. The third time we as group lie to the world outside us. “The world outside us refers to the people, the media both local and international and any other concerned party. The fourth time, we expect the world outside us to gobble down our lie and relate it back to us, in effect we want the world outside us to lie to us... some individuals, groups, media and countries take their courage in both hands to tell us the truth. And that is when we start to call them names anti-developments, anti-people elements, reactionary this and reactionary that... Such is our love for the thick layers of lie we have the gut to say no to our lies...” (pp. 228-229).

Therefore, in the extract above, characters in the story and readers are informed with the fake behind the point of discussion so that readers are informed about the fictitious nature of the story. So, individuals could not take the ideology that Exjuleists say this and that is not taken as real. Therefore, it is a metafiction in which an Exjuleist tells the fake behind Exjuleism itself.

In addition, the narrative below deals with Agodo's idea of inapproximation. Here, Agodo tells the idea of 'inapproximation' as an example of metafiction. Because, this idea deals with the beings pride while they are practising the fake behind their being. In other words, inapproximation, as Agodo explains, is the beings' willingness while they are engaging in the destruction of their beings. Therefore, inapproximation is the idea which deals with the beings destruction by themselves and that is why it is taken as a metafiction. It deals with something related to the simulated life experience of beings by their beings. The following extract from the novel may better describe this idea.

“This is inapproximation at its worst.” Agodo told himself noncommittally.  
“Inapproximation is where beings are proud of being bereft of their being. This is an instance of the compromised priding itself on compromising the best in it. It is a metaphysical regression pure and simple. It is a pelt by which the best is inapproximated.” (p. 274).

The above extract shows something which individuals could make it closer to what it is. In other words, beings are inapproximated proudly to bereft of their being means the willingness of beings to accept their simulated or compromised versions. In turn, it indicates metafiction where beings are telling they are not actually beings. However, they are the simulated version of their beings. This is directly related to metafiction. Metafiction is a narrative which refers to the fiction what individuals read is not the real life engagement, rather it is fiction. Metafiction is a fiction on fiction where suspension of disbelief is interrogated.

Like that of the previously discussions made upon the novel, *Borrowing Freedom*, as one of the novels selected for the analysis part, the following ideas in relation to metafiction are going to be discussed upon the novel, *Eyes and Mist*. For example, the extract below deals with the idea that people including Dr. Selam may have a possibility of taking Abi's skill of mind reading and computer skills as fake something that audiences could perceive it unnatural. Though audiences are convinced at the course of the narrative, there are narratives that deal with narratives which

may lead Abi's skill to be fiction on the fiction. Thus, the extract states the narrative where Abi himself thinks that Dr. Selam has a chance of taking Abi's skill as fake which could not be taken as real. The extract below from the text may better describe this idea.

“Doctor, you are wondering how I could do this, aren't you? I would have felt the same if I were in your place. You have never heard of or known about such a phenomenon as a medical professional. But what if that you never heard of something doesn't mean that something has never happened? What if it was there but no one took interest it, or some chose to understand it differently?”(p. 83).

Therefore, as ‘You have never heard of or known about such a phenomenon as a medical professional’, in the extract imply, Dr. Selam in particular and audiences in general have possibilities to take the skill Abi has is unreal. So, in some part of the above extract, Abi is stating the possibility of taking the fake behind his own narrative.

Moreover, it is possible to add the following metafictional stories in the novel, *The Thirteenth Sun*. In the novel the peasant, the husband of the conjured-woman, describes the fake behind the idea that the conjured-woman commands her husband in particular and other individuals in general not to eat the meat of the animals slaughtered for the sacrifice for the magical practices that she is practising at churches is something metafictional. Here, the husband is telling us the issue under discussion is something fake that individuals can eat the meat, and that is why the husband is suspicious to eat the meat and he definitely does.

She won't even allow me to take this good fat meat into my own house. And I eat it raw most of the time. That meat is for the devil, she says. And I say, so be it, if he comes I will let him have his share. And I wait and wait for him, but he doesn't come. And so I take it all for myself... (p. 67).

In relation to metafiction as a postmodern narrative strategy, the concept of historiographic metafiction should be discussed. Therefore, the following few pages deal with this idea with practical examples from the novels underdiscussion.

### **5.2.1. Historiographic Metafiction**

Historiographic metafiction is a narrative technique in which actual events and characters are fictionalized. The purpose here is not to talk about the actual history of events and characters.

However, it is a technique of using these historical events and characters for the development of fictional stories. For example, from the novel *Borrowing Freedom*, the extract below is about the dialogue that deals with the betrayal of Revorat and his father, Minister Donmuni. Here, Revorat used the AU's disregard of the contributions of Hailesilassie for the organization. (This is so because the novel had been written before the construction of the statue of Haile Silassie by AU situated in Addis Ababa). This is a narrative used for the development of the story in the fiction that the father has developed a sense of considering Revorat as the one who disregards the whole contributions that the father made to Revorat. The narrative goes as follows:

“Let me take you to Africa where the continental big boys erected in that beautiful capital named Addis Ababa a statue just for one of OAU's founding fathers, and forgot to erect one for emperor Hailesilassie. Do I look like to you as forgetful without being forgetful as the big wigs of Africa who forgot Emperor Hailesilassie- the key king in the founding of OAU? Decades back Emperor Hailesilassie had given them almost singlehandedly OAU and decades later they couldn't give him even a bulshit mound of concrete-and-iron-rods called memorial statue. Do I look like them to you, dad?” Revorat snorted his disappointment (p. 537).

The intention in the extract is not to talk about the history of Emperor Hailesilassie in relation to his contribution to the establishment of AU and the AU's disregard of the Emperor. It is using this historical figure and event for the development of the fictional story-the disagreement/sense of misrecognition of Revorat with his father, Minister Donmuni. Here in the extract above, one may be surprised with the comparison of the very little nature of the ordinary father and son relation, the less likely to be known, unlike Hailesilassie and AU very famous and known aspect of African History, probably World History. However, as a technique of departure in its move to challenge canonic narratives, instead of using very important figures and events, postmodernism uses ordinary individuals and ordinary events as a focal point of discussion. As Hutcheon(1995) states, this is different from historical fiction in which a fictional writing used for the treatment of the actual history, but here in historiographic Metafiction, history is used for the composition of the fictional story.

In addition, the following idea deals with the concept related to historiographic metafiction from the novel, *Eyes and Mist*. The historical happening of the 'Berlin Conference' in relation to

colonization, the operation of the ‘Holocaust’ and the operation of the ‘Red Terror’, these all treated in the narrative of the novel, *Eyes and Mist*, are used in a metafictional form. Here in the narrative, the intention of the utilization of these actual historical happenings is in the way that can enable narrators to develop the plot of the narrative; rather than, discussing the very essence and occurrence of these historical events. This way of utilizing historical events is related to the notion of historical metafiction.

Under the notion of historiographic metafiction, the character especial the heroes and villains are not expected to be the very famous figures that history recognizes. They are from the ordinary individuals. For example, in the novel mentioned above, when Ghanaian struggle in relation to slavery and colonization is concerned, the first person that comes in our mind is Kwame Nkrumah. He is one of the famous African freedom fighters that history recognizes for their extra ordinary contribution in African movements against slavery and colonization. However, in the narrative under discussion, the hero who is made as a point of discussion in his adventure against slavery in Ghana is Kofi’s grandfather, a very ordinary man whom history does not recount. Therefore, this is an example of historiographic metafiction.

Moreover, people whom we see as guests in TV shows are expected to be very famous in at least one area that a certain society gives recognition to them. However, in the novel, the guests that we see in Fitsum’s show are ordinary people who are not conventionally expected to be seen in TV shows. The society structurally thinks them as they are the ones from whom we have nothing to learn. However, Fitsum has his own criterion to make people his guests so that he presents people whom the society considers ordinary. The people whom the society considers unpopular are mostly taken as famous or hero for Fitsum’s show. He does not care with the mismatch between his parameter of selection and the selection criterion that other people expect. The extract placed below can describe this point of discussion.

The fact that someone is prosperous or influential, however, is not the only measure of quality to be glorified in Fitsum’s show the heroes. He is known for his selective provision of spotlight on his show for people he views as real heroes of humanity denying his show for people who were popular, famous or rich, but not fitting to his definition of heroes. (p. 175).

This different parameter, probably unfamiliar criterion to the society may be related to the irony Fitsum's own life. From his childhood period, especially when he was a high school student, even the first time of his position of coming a famous journalist, people including his school friends except Selam were not okay to be seen to go with Fitsum. His school friends mocked at him. However, currently he is coming to be a very famous man. He is the point of attention of most of the people including the ones whom the society expects famous are imitating what Fitsum does.

That school boy, who used to a butt of malicious jokes, is now the centre of attention of the whole nation. Now he is not the man subject to judgments and laughter; he selects people to be at the centre of the nation's attention. Now no one laughs at him; he laughs in his famous show at the values he calls the destroyers of civilization. Now no one dictates his actions and dressing style, he dictates, it; he doesn't ask for inclusion, people ask him to include them into his world so much so that he frequently receives requests for appearance on his show from very influential persons of the nation...(p. 174).

Furthermore, it is possible to add the following concepts in relation to historiographic metafiction from the novel *Land of the Yellow Bull*. Narratives in the novel mentioned here are made with the equal treatment of individuals. One is not taken as an everlasting status of being hero or very important figure of a certain community in particular and the world at large. An individual may be considered as ordinary in a certain time could have a chance to be seen as a very important figure in other times. Likewise, one could not always be seen as a very important figure. In the novel, there are evidences which could support this idea of the postmodern argument. For example, the following extract deals with the idea what is going on in the mind and heart of Delti, the current figure of the Hamar society as per the novel. He realizes this idea in relation to his own experience, and that is why it is taken as an exemplary narrative for historiographic metafiction.

Delti was immersed in thoughts of losing his favourite ones. Charlotte and Goity left him, but he was still there. As usual the dry leaves will fall and the new ones will replace them. The songs sung by the girls in honour of his courage will be sung for new heroes in the near future. What a pitiful coincidence! But it is something that one cannot control... (p. 379).

The idea mentioned in the above extract has a concept related to the postmodernist view of denying the characterization of everlasting figures, icons and the heroes/heroines of narratives. The postmodern view of creating the hero of a certain story relies on the characterization of an ordinary individual as a very important figure of the narrative. Similarly, in the extract above, Delti realizes that one could not be an everlasting hero; rather an ordinary man is going to be labeled as a hero. In simple terms, unlike historical fiction which relies on the characterization of a well know figure as the hero of the story, historiographic metafiction under the notion of postmodernism uses very ordinary individual as the hero of narratives.

Similarly, in the novel, *The Thirteenth Sun*, the peasant is not in a position of giving recognition to the very famous fitawrari, Fitawrari Woldu. In the narrative of the novel, though Fitawrari Woldu is very much surprised with the response of the peasant that the peasant does not know such a fitawrari named, Fitawrari Woldu. This is an example of historiographic metafiction, for it states the narrative that does not give value to the fitawrari that the nation aspires to have others who resemble him. Coupled with historiographic metafiction, the next few pages will discuss the postmodern consideration of time in relation to historiographic metafiction.

### **5.2.2. Postmodernists' Notion of Time**

As it has been discussed in the theoretical framework, in postmodern philosophy, there is not time category as past, present and future. In postmodern thought, there are cases in which there is an overlap experience of time. It has a sense of experiencing the past and the future through the present conditions. What is more important in the postmodern thought which does not give a trust on the rationality behind human mind is the present time. Unlike modernism, postmodern thought considers individuals as irrational. Therefore, the postmodern way of discussion has a trust upon what is at hand, and this is practised because of the assumption that humanbeings could not be for granted on what they did and what they will do because of their irrational trait.

For example, the following extract from the novel, *Borrowing Freedom*, deals with Agodo's inaugural concept related to the discussions on the concept of immediacy of time is addressed by The Sage to Ashton. This extract can be categorized under the category of religious discourse. In the extract, the concept of immediacy of time is dealt here connected to the man's relation with God, and hereunder is the extensive extract taken from the novel under point.

“For God there is neither past nor present nor future. For God the past and the future are as much immediate as the present is. Whereas, for human beings time is segmented into three categories of which man is at large viewed by mundane standards to have no control over the first and the last. But the man can have as much control over the past and the future as on the present. The key to this assertion is humanity’s resolve to remain true to the God in them...”. For human beings who have respect for their mind, who have the least intelligence required to set themselves apart from the rest world of animals, time has three interdependent and interfacing and intertwining segments. For dictators nonetheless, nothing exists and makes sense save the present (p. 265).

So, as it is understood from the extract above, be it either because of the existence of elements from God in people, or because of the irrationality behind people’s mind, the category of time into three segments is no longer worthy. As it has been mentioned earlier, the philosophy of postmodernism does not have a trust upon the rationality behind human mind. Postmortem thinking assumes that people are irrational. As the last sentence, “For dictators nonetheless, nothing exists and makes sense save the present”, in the extract above, indicates, there is no a category of time into segments as past, present and future. What is more important here in postmodernism is the present. This is similar to what is stated in the extract above, as “nothing exists and makes sense save the present”.

In addition, the following extract from the novel, *Land of the Yellow Bull*, deals with time as a concept which is not taken as an important aspect of life in Hamar society. The extract deals with Charlotte’s wrong assumption of time in relation to the Hamar society.

“How old are you?” Charlotte asked one of the girls.

“Yea!” the girl couldn’t understand what she asked her. “What is time?” she better ask herself. Since they were behind the times she could call them primitive. Obviously, to live in a perfect harmony with nature they follow and react to change but beyond that they couldn’t value their age by time (p. 235).

As it could be understood from the extract above, let alone categorizing time into past, present and future, even there is no any value and consideration of time at all. This is related to what postmodernism thought considers time. Under the notion of postmodernism, time in general and time categorization in particular is not taken as a very important aspect of life. This denial of



categorizing time frames is further described in the extract taken from the novel as follows. The way Charlotte describes the Hamar people who believe that the categorization of time into segments is not worthwhile.

They didn't want to destroy today in the memory of the past and in the hope of the tomorrow. They were not the masters of their destiny or fate. They are not fooled by time frame. Detachment is their wisdom... (p. 376).

In addition, the following extract deals with Charlotte's understanding about the Hamars perception of experiences based on time. Therefore, the actual extract below may better describe this point of discussion, and it is stated as follows:

On my arrival what the Hamars knew about me was only what I told them. They never asked me about my past. They said it was all the same and didn't matter past and futures are all the same for them. But the truth is 'now'... (p. 401).

So, the excerpt shows the idea that the categorization of time is not important. What is important for the Hamar people is only the present time. This is the idea directly related to the postmodernist denial of time categories into segments. Postmodernist have the claim of discussing the past and the future with the vantage points of the present settings. So far, the concept of a Postmodern Metafiction in relation to historiographic metafiction and postmodernist notion of time is discussed. Likewise, the next section of this chapter is designed to deal with discussions on another basic narrative strategy of postmodernism-intertextuality.

### **5.3. Intertextuality**

Intertextuality is one of the chief narrative features of postmodernism, and it refers the interwoven between or among discourses. Therefore, one text has a chance to be the cause for another text. The interwoven may be in favour or against one another. In other words, the text originated from a certain text may come to be for or against the formerly produced text. However, the postmodern consideration of intertextuality as it has been discussed in the theoretical framework is intentionally designed to interrogate the distance between discourses in the interwoven texts. This is mostly designed to create a question or to place some adjustments how far the current narrative is from the former narrative.

In postmodernism, originality which could be raised in relation to intertextuality is not emphasised. Any text does not have a status of claiming to be original. In other words, under the postmodern notion of intertextuality, there is no an identified source and an identified end of narratives. Therefore, being the first or the second narrative is not a grantee to be identified as a beginning and an end as well. Narratives are simply in interwoven ways where anyone of the narratives does not have a claim of originality. Because, in postmodernism, intertextuality is not made to show the agreements between the interwoven texts; rather, it is primarily made to disclose the gaps or departure between the interwoven texts.

For example, the novel, *Borrowing Freedom* comes to an end with the phrase “**The Beginning**”, and it implies that the novel is going to be used as a beginning of another text which could not be exactly guessed. It is known only that the novel does not have an identified ending as the said phrase implies. However, what kind of plot line the newly constructed narrative will have is not known, this novel will lead to another text. This feature of leaving the readers’ mind in an open ended form is one typical feature of postmodern texts. Thus, the following consecutive pages discuss intertextuality in far more detailed analysis.

Similar to the first intertextuality which deals with the phrase ‘The Beginning’, as it has been discussed above, the next intertextual aspect of the novel is related the frequent utilization of the title, ‘**Enver Hoxha of Exjuleism**’, for the mayors. Therefore, as it could be inferred from History, this association traces back to the leader of the first communist Albania. It has been discussed so far that the purpose of intertextuality under the notion of postmodernism is to show the gap between the former and the later texts. Likewise, here, though the title, Enver Hoxha of Exjuleism, is frequently utilized, what Enver Hoxha of Albania did is totally different from what Exjuleist leaders like Chebodi do to Ajeebuax with an ideology-Exjuleism which is an imaginative ideology different from the political ideologies available in the world. As it can be known from History, Enver Hoxha is a communist chief leader of Albania who built an independent and industrialized country, Albania from the semi-feudal Empire of Ottoman Turkey. As a communist, his side is to the labour or people in the lower class. However, these Exjuleist leaders do not do any aspect of development to their country, Ajeebuax except leading their own luxurious life at the expense of the citizens’. Therefore, as a postmodernist

intertextuality, the said title here is used in a sarcastic way to show the gaps between these different leaders in the two different countries.

In addition, there is a frequent utilization of the Ethiopian proverbs and sayings by The Sage, for The Sage with scholarship as an opportunity has had an exposure to the Ethiopian culture. Here, in most of the narratives, the Ethiopian proverbs are used in the reversed form. It is directly related to the postmodern perception of intertextuality. In other words, most of the proverbs in this novel are not used as they are used in the way the Ethiopians use them. The proverbs here in the novel are used in a reversed way. The following example can support this argument.

The Sage discusses the concept of ‘inapproximation’; the idea refers to the discrepancy between the expected human life and the different actual happenings of this life with the utilization of Ethiopian proverbs. Therefore, as a postmodern intertextuality, The Sage uses the reversed form of the Ethiopian proverb: “**Siterut abet; silkut wodeyet/ Yes, when summoned; where, when delegated**” which refers to a person who is ready to be helpful in the way that one likes him or her to manipulate. However, in the novel, this proverb is used in a reversed form as: “**Saiterut abet, sailkut wodeyet/ Yes, though not summoned; where, though not delegated,**” (p. 261).

The above proverb is the reversed form of the proverb mentioned earlier than it, and it refers to the one who is ready to take your manipulation in the contrary or to the opposite side of your expectation. Or the one who is availing himself/herself while you do not like to get him/her in person. Thus, this enables to express the concept of ‘inapproximation’ which technically refers the gap between what is expected and the different actual practice of the expected thing. It is an example of postmodern intertextuality- an intertextuality which is designed to show the distance between the texts intertwined-the distance between discourses in the former and the later texts.

In addition, it is possible to consider the following postmodern intertextual narrative that Agodo uses when he is asked by the so called judge, ironically named ‘father of justice’. Agodo is accused in the court for the simple reason that he interrogates or explains the irrationality behind corrupt Exjuleistic leaders in relation to Plato’s idea, ‘The Allegory of the Cave’.

“Plato is trying to teach us how the best in us, the soul, is incarcerated in the body. The allegory of the cave is dedicated to showing how far removed we are in the world of appearance from our being.” (pp. 209-210).

The extract above, in relation to the allegory of the cave where, Plato describes situations outside of the cave is totally different from the experience in the cave. Similarly, Agodo's idea in the extract shows the distance between what is supposed to be in human's life and the different practical living engagements of human life. And this is achieved; as a result of the implausibility behind Plato's allegory of the cave in this world of irrationality. In turn, this led individuals to create their own caves where the social contracts are needed for only some individuals with their own cave different from Plato's cave is stated as follows.

“The cave name invariably as the social contract, general will, collective will, law etcetera, etcetera. To legitimize the need for the new cave the social contract thinker came up more or less with the jeopardy that would be fall humanity if it is to stay in the state of nature. The choice was then between handing over one's freedom to a callous, unthinking, unfeeling, body of a mindless lord named social contract or law or general will on one hand, and staying in the state of nature where the rule of law, of fist, is oiled by blood and cushioned on the flesh of unlucky or the weak...” (p. 209).

In general, as a postmodern intertextuality which shows the distance between the discourses of the intertextualized texts; practically, Plato's allegory of the cave is mentioned here in the way that the world is not a position of exercising things as per the social contracts which will make the mass to be beneficiaries. People are practising things in a different way resulted from the different modes of social contracts which people create for the benefit of only some people-people with power.

Similarly, as it has been discussed under the section which deals with interrogating the reality, there is a postmodernist intertextuality on page 263 of the text. Here the creation of the aforementioned social contracts by individuals is related to the creation of human beings. The postmodernist intertextuality here is relied in the way that God does not worship human beings, for they are his creations. However, the social contracts are worshiped by their creator human beings. Though the adjustment from the former discourse is not a must, this gap or the distance between the former discourse and the newly constructed discourse shows us a postmodern sense of intertextuality.

Moreover, the following idea discusses the idea that the corrupt judge, Father of Justice, discusses issues in relation to jealousy whether it is associated with Adam or Eve. When he was

asked to tell the reason why he killed his fourth wife, he provided the answer that he killed her for the jealousy that she has inherited from her mother-Eve. He said that the sense of jealousy has started with Eve's rib counting. He further provided the answer in the justifiable way as indicated in the following extract.

“Nonetheless there was no way Eve could be certain of the existence or none existence of another woman, except through rib counting. Jealousy made her its slave. It left loose in her and in her children for eternity to come, the thirst of suspicion that never gets slaked. Jealousy has been riding humanity unbridled since. In fine, that explains why Eve had been busy, in the name of caressing or fondling her husband, counting the ribs of Adam...and the fourth wife of mine is had taken more doses of jealousy than was natural, according to the story I don't believe the least bit in. I don't believe in it simply because it traces its origin back to religious mazes” (p. 279).

There is intertextuality in the extract above. However, this intertextuality is not a postmodern intertextuality, for it is provided similarly with the discourse there in the former text. Postmodern intertextuality, as it has been discussed in the previous pages, is used to show the distance between the texts treated in the intertextual discourse, and is mostly designed to interrogate the plausibility behind the former text. Therefore, having the idea stated in the above extract as a background, the idea placed in the next extract has a postmodern intertextuality. The foregrounded idea in the extract below claims interrogation of reality as it is addressed by Ashton, one of the protagonist characters. She interrogates Father of Justice, the so called judge, to react on the reality mentioned in the idea treated under the extract above. In other words, though postmodernism does not care about the source of things, the claim in the extract below is related to the idea that Eve could not be the source of jealousy.

“What can explain the jealousy in men?” Ashton asked.

“Perhaps they have inherited it from their original mother, which Eve is.” Father of Justice guffawed...

“How about Adam himself? ...”

“He is a man.”

“Who said he is not?” ... (p. 280).

Therefore, as it is mentioned above, a need to know the source of something is not the concern of postmodernism. Postmodernism claims the idea that source is vague. Likewise, one could not be sure in the interrogation regarding to the source of jealousy as it is discussed in the earlier consecutive extracts. The source of jealousy is not Eve; rather it looks like the issue is related to for Adam. It might be because of the issue alluded from the religious point of view that he was Adam that first created, and Eve is created from Adam. Still as per postmodern assumptions, the above argument may not be sufficient to say that the source of jealousy is Adam for the simple and very poor reason that Adam was created first. Similarly, there is no sufficient justification to associate the idea to Eve too.

Moreover, it is good to discuss the following intertextualized discourses from the novels, *Land of the Yellow Bull*, *Eyes and Mist* and *The Thirteenth Sun* respectively.. As it is stated above, originality in the postmodern thought is not known. There is no an absolute source and end of narratives that audiences encounter. Thus, the extract below deals with the idea that is going on in the mind and heart of the narrator in the novel, *Land of the Yellow Bull*, in relation to the absence of originality. In this extract, the narrator comments on the incapability of Charlotte in particular and mankind in general. What might people are great and what might the technology people use is advanced, they cannot do things which could be considered original. Under the notion of postmodernism, human beings could not create something original. Something is not come to be or originated from nothing. However, it is from unidentified source. Still this unidentified source of something is not considered to be original. It is unidentified as per the people's potential so that people could not know whether it is original or not. In turn, this is close to say nothing is original.

There can be no true philosopher who hasn't soliloquized, or a scientist who hasn't dogged himself with griping experimentation and exhausted his patience... an author or a painter who has not striven to produce a masterpiece out of the secrets of nature. No precious achievements out of nothing (p. 229).

The assumption in the extract above is related to the idea which could be summarized as follows. Though it is not clearly known before, some extra ordinary discovery is made by anyone, it was there behind nature so that it could not be considered as original. The assumption is related to the idea that the innovator could not make something from nothing. As the last sentence in the

extract above 'No precious achievements out of nothing' states, something is not came to be from nothing. In other words, the idea is related to say nothing is original.

In addition, the following extract from the novel mentioned above, deals with postmodern intertextuality between the very essences of one's pioneering skill and the conventionally taken canonic aspects of life. Here, there are two discourses; namely, individual's pioneering skill (though as a postmodern thought their finding or way is not considered original), and the conventionally accepted aspects of life. Likewise, in the following extract the idea is stated as: those who are not worried in conventional aspects of life are not able to utilize their pioneering skills. However, those who are deviant to create challenges on the conventional aspects of life are more likely to be effective. Therefore, the intertextuality here is designed to show the gaps or the problem with the canonically accepted aspects of life so that it has a postmodern intertextuality.

Biologically, every individual in his own way is unique. Since similarity could make him common, it doesn't help to have an unforgettable position or be a pioneer in something. Nevertheless, uniqueness of style on outlook can be an essential symbol of his confidence and fulfillment. From this fact, he deduced that those who disagreed had a better chance of discovering a new idea than those who agreed with everything. That is why he mostly, argued. Rather than, saying red is red, those that say red is white have a greater chance to step up to reason of a specific truth (pp. 349-350).

As has been indicated in the extract, the sentence 'Rather than, saying red is red, those that say red is white have a greater chance to step up to reason of a specific truth' states intertextuality. It is made in the deviation from the conventionally accepted aspects of life. Therefore, the postmodern intertextuality shows the distance between the interwoven discourses.

The following intertextuality from *Land of the Yellow Bull* is made in a kind of challenging issues on binary opposition which is designed between the cultural variations of Hamar society and the western especially England's. This intertextuality is made in the eyes of Goity when she has been taken to there in England by her husband Kello and Charlotte. Here, in the extract, intertextuality is presented with what is foregrounded in England, and is presented with the backgrounded experience of Goity in Hamar.

Of course she saw the sunlight was beginning to creep over the tall apartments. “Yea! What surprises me most is the difficulty of distinguishing day and night. Even day and night are mixed, cars and humans are mixed... are mixed...everything is mixture.” She said and laughed. “Why Borjo! If you have created everything in perfect order where does their imperfection come from? How could they run without a break? They easily feel joyful; get hurt with silly coincidences, burst with happiness in seeing pictures, and pick up their legs for seeing birds and game... is that what life means, rushing like wind in all directions?” She mumbled (p. 405).

In the extract above, the intertextuality between the Hamar tradition and the western tradition is made impliedly. The contrast is made with making the experience that Goity went through in Hamar is backgrounded. As postmodern intertextuality, the distance is shown as these binary pairs are presented as imperfect unlike the Hamar tradition. In short, similar to the previously discussed intertextuality as postmodern interwoven, discourses have been made where the intertextuality is used in order to show the gap between the interwoven discourses. Similarly, the following some pages deal with this notion with practical textual demonstrations in the novel, *Eyes and Mist*. For example, there is a biblical quotation, “Man cannot live on bread alone; but also the word of God,” (p. 56) that professor Netsanet in the novel has used to describe the importance of wireless electric power analogously. Here, the quotation is used in the form of intertextuality. However, the intertextuality here is vague.

The quotation is used for explaining the importance of electric power. But the biblical intention of the quotation is related to need of man’s spiritual life beyond the secular life; the intention is not restricted only to secular life. But energy is fully a secular aspect of human life. Therefore, the intertextuality here is used in a vague form which is difficult to be related to postmodern texts though the intertextuality here does not show the distance because postmodern intertextuality is used in the way which shows gaps between the intertextualized discourses where the former one is trivialized. Therefore, the intertextuality here is difficult to be categorized either as postmodern intertextuality, or as intertextuality in its normal sense.

Moreover, there are intertextual discourses in relation to historical issues. The issue of ‘Berlin Conference’, a conference alluded from history. It is known that the Berlin Conference is the issue in which the European colonizers had a conference in which they discussed the areas that



the colonizers can colonize without making conflicts among the colonizers themselves. However, in the novel as a postmodern text, the above historical fact is not used in the way it had been discussed. It is used in the way that can show the irrationality and the wrong deeds behind the European civilization. Here the intertextuality is used for showing the distance between the very essence of the concept in the first discourse and in the second discourse, basically to make some sort of adjustment. Thus, it is a typical postmodern intertextuality. This is similar with the historical happening of the holocaust, the killing of the Jews by Nazi. Basically this historical happening is experienced by Adolf Hitler and his fans. However, as postmodern intertextuality mentioned in the novel, *Eyes and Mist*, this historical happening is used in the way that can state the Holocaust is not the experience that should not be associated with only Adolf Hitler of Nazi in Germany. The incident in association to Hitler is the immediate cause and the cover for the long distance irrationality of the Europeans at large. Therefore, this historical happening is used in the way that can show the cumulative Europeans' misrecognition of the others.

“Well, Nazi is the name they took when they came to power in Europe. In other parts of the world they had taken all sorts of names. They went with names, like, civilizers, missionaries and colonizers. And they didn't sprout out of Germany only but from many countries in Europe who claimed to have religious sanctions, divine permission and gun power to enslave, to torture, to kill and to annihilate what they regarded as the others...”  
(p. 127).

Lastly, the following two consecutive ideas from the novel, *The Thirteenth Sun*, will bring the point of discussion in relation to intertextuality to its conclusion. The first postmodern intertextual narrative in the novel mentioned is related to the preacher prefers a woman to bring a goat than a sheep for the sacrifice she is going to make a feast for the priest at church Abbo in Zikuala. As it is mentioned page 109-110 of the novel, the preacher associates the sacrifice made by sacrificing the goat with the sheep which symbolizes Jesus Christ. However, from the religious point of view, a goat has a negative connotation since it symbolizes the sinners. Even Jesus Christ Himself has provided Abraham a sheep as a substitution to his son to the sacrifice Abraham provided. Therefore it is a typical postmodern intertextuality, for it shows a departure from the previous established religious knowledge.

In addition, the following postmodern intertextual narrative from the same novel could be added to the case in point. In the extract below, the conjured-woman has abused the Ethiopian Orthodox Church's notion of fasting. The woman tries to express a point of departure from the very purpose of fasting -getting blessing from God. However, as it is indicated in the extract, the conjured-woman tries to teach ideas as if the primary purpose of fasting were to reduce fat and meat from our body, and typically, it is a postmodern intertextuality, for it is designed to make a ridiculous on the primary purpose of fasting is getting blessing from God. As per Ethiopian Orthodox Church, the primary purpose of fasting is not dedicated to fat and meat removal from our body. It has a spiritual purpose than the secular purpose as described above.

“Why, your orthodox church has done all it could to clear the way for you. It has fixed for you fasting days so as to give you a chance to abstain from fat and meat... why, you will have about fifty-six days in which to eat fat and meat every year. It is of course advisable to seek the advice of your father-confessor to take on yourselves some more fasting days...” (p. 37).

In general, the above mentioned and other similar previous historical, religious and other aspects of life are used in the way that can show the different aspects of the discourse. Mostly, they are used in the way that can create challenges in the previously used discourses. And this is the postmodern concept of intertextuality where the current discourse is intentionally designed to show the gap from the previous discourse where that intertextualized concept is made to the present discourse.

The last chapter of the analysis, chapter, six, is designed to deal with maximalism and denial of superior over inferior cultural presentation as the distinguishing postmodern narrative features of the novels under discussion. As it has been indicated in the methodology part of this dissertation, the analysis is organized into three chapters based on some rationales, and from these rationales, taking some postmodern narrative features which could distinguish one individual novel from other selected novels under discussion, is one. Hence, maximalism and denial of superior over inferior cultural presentation are the distinguishing or dividing narrative features among all the selected novels. Therefore, the next chapter deals with these postmodern narrative features. As a chapter which could show the differences among the individual novels in focus, the emphasis of this chapter is only the differences among the novels.

## **Chapter Six: Maximalism and Denial of Superior over Inferior Cultural Presentation as Distinguishing Postmodern Narrative Strategies in the Novels**

As has been indicated, this is a chapter which shows the basic differences among the novels in line with the chief postmodern narrative strategies. Thus, this chapter will give a focus on only the postmodern features reflected in the individual novels as unique postmodern narrative strategies.

### **6.1. Denial of Superior over Inferior Cultural Presentation in *Land of the Yellow Bull***

As indicated in the theoretical framework, one of the theoretical models is related to Bertens' (1995) idea on the politics of culture', as explained in his book entitled with *The Idea of the Postmodern*, and Hutcheon's (1988) *The Poetics of Postmodernism*. Their notion on the politics of culture is mainly related to '**the denial of high over low presentation of culture**' which is a kind of Derrida's 'Differences' on deconstruction. As it has been indicated in the introductory part of the analysis, the representation of culture in *Land of the Yellow Bull* is presented in a deviant form. It deviates from the way that is conventionally informed by the westerners' view of cultural presentation.

In the novel, the Hamar culture is presented in a way that traps the attention of Charlotte Alfred, the character from the Western world, United Kingdom. It is known that Charlotte is from the world where the presentation of culture is understood as one is superior over the other. In most of the cases, the western culture is taken as superior, expected to be the culture that the entire world takes it as a mode of life. However, in the novel, *Land of the Yellow Bull*, Charlotte, has come across a different narrative where her mind is fully preoccupied with the cultural affection that she has never expected it to be. Charlotte's love towards the Hamar culture which is conventionally taken as inferior is not normally expected to be real.

Charlotte is from the Western world, the area in which the idea of presenting culture as superior over inferior cultural presentation has been innovated. This representation, the presentation of superior over inferior culture is highly interrogated with postmodern views. Therefore, the novel has presented with narratives in the way that denies the superior over inferior cultural

presentation. Thus, the following consecutive pages are concerned with the detail discussion on this issue.

The two major characters, Charlotte and Delti, as it has slightly been indicated are characterized from the two cultures which are conventionally taken as the two extremes in cultural representation. Charlotte is from the western world whose culture is conventionally taken as superior over the culture of Delti from Hamar. This extremity of culture is stated in the novel while Goity's (the character from Hamer) journey to Europe is proposed. The extract below tells us the westerners' assumption towards culture as depicted by Steve, a character from United Kingdom. The extreme presentation of culture where the western culture is taken as superior while the Hamars' is considered as inferior is described as follows:

“Truthfully, I don't know what Goity would feel when she traveled from one extreme to the other. I cannot be sure why she would agree to travel such a vast distance. But her visit to the civilized world might contradict her natural belief. And it is beyond my expectation to imagine the effect of the contradiction. Nevertheless, one thing will occur for sure, that is some kind of change in her thinking. Who knows Goity might have interest in modern education and become vanguard of women in our community. If not she might blame her identity with a feeling of guilt and inferiority,” (pp. 347-48).

So, as ideas are developed in the mind and heart of Steve in particular and the white people in general, the western culture is considered as civilized and modernized cumulatively considered as superior, while the Hamar culture is considered as inferior. And their mind style in the consideration of culture other than theirs is labeling as inferior.

This, Eurocentric thinking is stretched to the extent of the people themselves consider their own culture as inferior though the practical happening as it is disclosed in the novel, *Land of the Yellow Bull*, is totally different. The presentation of the Westerns culture and the Hamar culture as extremes is further explained below shows the mind style of both the local people as reflected by Delti and the westerners' as it is depicted by Charlotte. In the Hamars' mind style, wealth is measured with the number of animals like goats, cattle, sheep and beehives that an individual has. This perception of wealth has nothing with the consideration of wealth in the western world.

“...How much livestock does your father have?” He asked her in rhetorical mood.

“He had no livestock. He was a professor. He managed our life with his salary which was...” She told him pushing her hair away from her forehead...

“What about goats and beehives?” he added.

“He didn’t have any” She replied. Delti felt sad for thinking that her father had sent her to this place because he might be poor. For him, wealth consisted in livestock, goats and beehives. For Charlotte, the only way to communicate well was to be a quite submissive. Delti Geldi had known that the owner of all the wealth was the husband. There is no doubt about it ... (pp. 147-148).

With all these and other presentations of these two extremes of cultural, the cultural representation in the novel is presented in a different way in which the Hamar culture is equally celebrated with the western culture. It is presented in the way that can deny the superior over inferior presentation of culture. It is reflected in the mind and heart of the most rounded character of the novel, Charlotte.

The extract below is related to the strong feeling of love and affection what is going on in the mind and heart of Charlotte and the Hamar people about her love towards the Hamar culture, and the people’s love towards Charlotte. This is experienced while she is ready to go to United Kingdom for the presentation of her research. She is extremely in deep love with the Hamar people including their animals and environment. She is in struggling her feeling and crying. She could not realize that whether the life engagement that she has experienced from the Hamar culture exists in the world other than the Hamar world or not. The extract states something odd.

It is surprising to see an individual from the world where the Hamar and other similar third world cultures are considered inferior in contrast to the western culture to sense things in the way described below. Regardless of this expectation, Charlotte from United Kingdom is a character who is highly immersed into the Hamar culture with strong affection. Even she is not sure that she does not believe the narrative what is experienced is to be true in other worlds. Her feeling is equivalently shared by the Hamar people too. Hereunder is the extract which describes this point of discussion.

She took a lot of pictures and put what she observed in her notebook. She felt restless with a broken heart. The villagers who watched her from a distance, on her arrival two years ago, felt depressed now and their eyes were filled with tears when they heard about her departure. Even the cattle that threatened her with their horns were approaching to seek her odour and licked her salty hands. Charlotte had never encountered such heart-rending love either from people or animals in the other world where friendship is based on economic benefit. She was moved to tears of missing the breath taking nature and wonderful interaction... (p. 367).

The extract above states the culture which is conventionally supposed to be inferior has a potential to make people from the so called 'superior' culture, are highly attracted. It is clearly indicated by the feeling Charlotte has towards the Hamar culture. As the text, 'Charlotte had never encountered such heart-rending love either from people or animals in the other world where friendship is based on economic benefit', in the extract above, states the Hamar culture is not the culture which is practised as per the economic importance of people. This is made so unlike the other world where the most modes of friendship are related to the economic benefit. However, friendship in Hamar culture is natural in which humanity based relationship is highly emphasised.

The following idea which reveals the generous character of the Hamar people may be taken as an additional example. The extract below creates astonishment that Charlotte came across when she asked Delti, her Hamar lover, to take money which could be the bride wealth he is going to pay. However, Delti refuses to do so, and this is surprising to Charlotte. She sent Kello to deal the matter with Delti. Charlotte has learned that the Hamar men have responsibilities to pay a relative amount of many in kind to the bride's family.

To the effect mentioned above, though she does not have a close family here in Hamar, she assumes that Delti has to discharge this cultural regulation. On the other hand, she does not want to see Delti, her sweet heart, worries about the payment that he is going to pay to her. She wants to cover this expense by her own. She sent Kello, her immediate assistant in the research process, to disclose the matter to Delti. However, Delti is not okay to accept her money. He decided that he has to pay the money by his own. This is a unique culture to Charlotte.

“I am so sorry for disturbing you Kello.” She said. “You know! I cried because of joy-Delti’s purest spirit. It is absolutely fascinating personality. Our material world is filled with self centred and selfish individuals. In this indifferent world people look at each other with suspicion. Science and technology has diverted the collective meaning of life. Value is only evaluated on the basis of its profit not its utility. Nevertheless, Delti is living with his enormous traditional ego. He refused to accept when we told him that I would cover the bride wealth that would take him five years to pay. ...” (pp. 280-81).

It is possible to add the following heart touching narrative that shows how the Hamars’ culture is very much impressive to the people other than their world. The extract deals with how Charlotte and the Hamar people are coming sentimentally one. The extensive excerpt from the novel may better describe this idea so that one could understand the superior over inferior cultural categorization is not worthwhile.

“I was born in a huge country; the one thing I don’t like there is the social life. I am, now, half Hamer and I know the meaning of love and respect...I really love your independent mind. I have to confess that I have flashback of what happened behind the back of Ivangadi dance. I have been in the towers of London. But, I never had imagined that the enjoyment in the bush would more than that... Hereafter, I am quite sure, we won’t act as if we are from different planets.” She said, but everything turned to sour. “We are leaving, but by no means separated,” she said, and burst into tears. All the Hamers bent their heads. They gasped. Even the elders couldn’t disguise their sorrow. ... (pp. 374-375).

In addition, the consecutive extracts below show the denial of superior over inferior cultural presentations. For example, the following excerpt deals with how Charlotte is impressed with the easy, fascinating and nature based Hamar culture. She makes the dialogue without identifying the particular person to whom she is addressing the discourse.

“Here, there is not huge dream. Consequently, one has less dislike for the other. This lets your heart sing the song of pure love. I learned from you the attitude of forgetting the finished past...even though we are physically far, bear in mind that we are close,” she said, without recalling whom she was talking to (p. 16).

The extract above is a clear indication that the cultural practices experienced among the Hamar people are considered as pure and free from regrets. This has a great influence on Charlotte's mind not to spiritually detach herself from these people. In addition, the extract below shows how the Hamar people are kind, sociable cumulatively hospitalist in treating any creation be an animal or an individual. They have a hospitality skill which traps the attention of the stranger. They associate this habit with the will of their god- Bankimoro.

“The Hamars have enormous humanity and hospitality to all human beings. They have an impressive saying that conforms to this tendency, ‘if a goat is lost and reaches a village, you will take it to the goat kraal. If you find a lost cow, you are supposed to take it to the cattle kraal... if the lost one is human; you will take the stranger to your house and share with him what you have. Because, he is human like you, his need is exactly similar with yours. It is therefore your responsibility to look after him’. This was what Bankimoro ordered them to accomplish in their whole life.” (p. 93).

The following text shows the Hamars' special talent in issues related to conflict and conflict resolution matters. Here, unlike the rest of the world whose previously chaos and disorders are taken as the profound cause of disagreements and conflicts experienced here and there, the Hamars do not have problems in relation to the previous matters. They make the past disputes as the things which have nothing to do with their present settings. The extract describes this point of attention as:

Alternatively, Charlotte knew that many conflicts among nations or ethnic groups today are the result of accumulated historical burdens and mistreatment. These are passed on from generation to generation because of ignorance or unwillingness to take responsibility. Thus, the best way against the world's stupidity, meanness and despair is simply harmonizing her with all its ambiguity and complexity. These help to relieve the burden of narrow mindedness and free her to experience greater progress and harmony (p. 232).

Moreover, the following successive extracts show the impressive aspects of the Hamar culture in contrast to the outside world. As it is going on in the minds and hearts of Charlotte, Kello and Goity, these extracts below state how the Hamar tradition is by far better than the western culture. The first extract below deals with the genuine feeling of Goity towards her former lover,



Delti, and the impression of Charlotte with Goity's pure, straight and free feeling. Goity is speaking her mind about her former lover, Delti in front of Kello, her current husband. While he is asking her the feeling she has towards her former lover, Delti in contrast to her current feeling towards the husband, to Kello himself, she has reacted as stated in the extract below.

“Yea! For Borjo sake, do you think that you have thrown him away and own my heart, only for yourself? If you think like that every woman will laugh at you. Above and beyond, it is only because Delti and I belonged to the same family that I was married to you. Or else I would have been immensely happy had I been his assistant willingly for the rest of my life.”... After Charlotte listened to Goity's idea, she visualized the real life fantasy in Hamar. “How good it would have been if people were as clean minded as you are? We wouldn't have hidden our feeling with dirt. It would be fascinating to find exclusively genuine people in this artificial glittering world of ours,” she thought and hot tears filled her eyes (p. 393).

This artificiality of the world, the world other than the Hamar world, especially the western world, is clearly depicted in the mind and heart of Goity. When she was taken to Europe, United Kingdom, by Charlotte and her husband, Kello, Goity was worried about the life experience she met there. She has got a life completely different from the life experience she has gone through in her homeland, Hamar. She expresses her impression to Charlotte in relation to these experience differences. This idea is described in the following extract as it is deeprooted in Goity's mind.

“Charlotte you people are enthusiastic for what you called time... I heard you say that ‘time is more than anything.’ It is more than relationship, friendship and love... I wish I could see and know what time looks like. For us cheerfulness, friendship, and silence... are more than everything... we own cattle, sheep and goats, but happiness and sorrow are not private. To share these, we share everything...our children, our fame belongs to one another. Nothing is private in Borjo's kingdom. Bankimoro welcomed all who came from different countries. No matter what their skin colour, they wore, their language was different...he welcomed them with love, and his love has made one...” she said (pp. 413-414).

This shows the denial of the superior over inferior cultural representations. There is no any different categorization for the variations in colour, size and other irrelevant elements to the point in case. Everything is equally seen and celebrated. As it is viewed in the views of postmodern thoughts, this is totally different from the superior over inferior categorization matters.

Finally, the notion of denying superior over inferior cultural representation is concluded with the following very extraordinary and extensive epistolary discourse that Charlotte has written to her mother. This letter as reflected in the novel can bring the conclusion in relation to the postmodern discussion on the denial of superior over inferior cultural presentation of the novel. Though the letter is too long to be presented here, it is good to get the extract placed, for it is important in order to show the conventional categorization of superior over inferior culture is not worthwhile in postmodern views. Taking the westerners' cultural structure for granted, one may expect Charlotte would be in a position of discomfort with the Hamar culture, for Charlotte is from the culture where the categorization of culture as superior over inferior is systematically designed. However, as it could be understood ideas from the excerpt purposefully placed, the feeling Charlotte has experienced in the Hamar Culture is totally different from the scenario.

“Mom, you and I are living in two extremes. We are on one planet but two worlds. I am not going to tell you about an extravaganza performance of life. I live in a tranquil village... I am no living my dream, but I have found a new lease of life. Everyday I am grateful for the life I have here. I love my little house and garden. Sometimes, I bubble over inside, I adore it so much... Anyone can say anything about it from outside. I don't mind whoever says that the horizon is the end of our world. I am certain that it is just a saying not knowing. But, I doubt whether anyone who has seen what I have witnessed would think this would be a better world than that one...But as we all know in the modern world, keeping balance is not always easy: just one negative thought or word can throw us totally off balance... to put it bluntly, we become a self centred who burnt our own house down in order to claim the insurance money –what a scam!... I am sick of pretension and the horrible selfishness...” (pp. 301-303).

The world in general and the Europeans' blindness in particular, in relation to their categorization of culture as superior and inferior, is practised in the way they like. They represent

culture as superior over inferior for no accepted measurement of evaluation. They make this for the simple reason that they do not like others' culture, or the culture they consider as inferior is different from theirs. Therefore, they simply consider the culture other than theirs is inferior and 'the other', something totally different and uncivilized. They have made this in contrast to theirs which they expect superior. They force the others to assimilate the so called superior culture.

All in all, the above deliberate extensive discourses are comprehensive concepts which can precisely interrogate the so called reality in relation to the superior over inferior cultural presentation. People conventionally take this mode of cultural presentation as real, while the reality is ironically justified in the way the analyses made so far. This part leads to the conclusion of the denial of this cultural presentation.

Thus, the analysis made so far is related to the irony behind the wrong conventional idea of categorizing culture as superior over inferior where the reality is totally different. Thus, taking the analysis made as a guarantee, culture and cultural traditions should be given equal recognition and respect. Taking one as superior and the other inferior does not have ground rule. Surprisingly, as Derrida's idea, 'the center may be the decenter; implies things may be reversed. This is practically seen in the analysis so far where the so called inferior culture surpasses from its conventionally taken superior counterpart. As postmodern thoughts predict there is no superior over inferior cultural categorization.

So far, the issue of denial of superior over inferior cultural presentation in the novel, *Land of the Yellow Bull*, has precisely been discussed. Likewise the next section of this chapter is designed with the brief discussion of maximalism in the novel *Borrowing Freedom*.

## **6.2. Maximalism in *Borrowing Freedom***

Unlike minimalism where stories are presented in a summarized way, Maximalism in postmodern thought is believed to be the narrative strategy in which more descriptions, comments, and details of narratives are provided. For example, in the novel, *Borrowing Freedom*, Chebodi, the leader of the country, Ajeebuax, and Donmuni, the minister of the fall back wallet / the foreign minister are talking an extensive discourse about the ways in which they can trap Ashton and her group. In their discourse, they are talking uninterruptedly for three and so consecutive chapters. This is unusual to see characters in which they are talking

uninterruptedly for three and above chapters. Surprisingly, as discussed, the speech is made through phone.

In addition, in most of the narratives of the novel, characters talk a lot about an idea which has nothing to do with their point of discussion. And it is an example of fragmentation and maximalism too. It is maximalism, for they are using much more discourse for at least for least content.

There are also cases in which leaders could not identify the opening speech of a certain occasion. They have similar introductions or opening speeches for all occasions. It is surprising to deliver identical opening speech for the different discourse the characters in the story make. They speak an identical introduction as an official opening speech though the occasions in which the characters engaged are different. Beyond being absurd, this type of narrative creates Maximalism; because, leaders face confusion to identify which text is presented to a certain occasion, or not; since all speeches they have produced have similar extensive introduction.

Because of using an identical introductory speech, the Exjuleists have chances in which the speakers go back to search another text, for speakers will come back to the introduction when he/she realizes that he /she is not reading the appropriate text for a certain occasion. Since texts have identical opening speech though the discourses which would be provided after the introductory speech are different, the speaker may not right in choosing the appropriate discourse provided for a certain occasion. Thus, this practice takes an extensive narrative time which leads to the experience of maximalism in which a certain speaker has been taking a text irrelevant to the point underdiscussion.

Moreover, the novel, *Borrowing Freedom*, is full of descriptions. This description is preoccupied with more details, provided about certain issues which could not actually need more details. Thus, it is relatively the bulkiest novel from the four novels selected for this study. It is made as result of adding unnecessary description. Descriptions which may not have a strong relation to the point of discussion are added. For example, the following unrelated descriptions that Chebodi tells to the international journalists while they are asking him to tell where his Country, Ajeebuax is found is the best example which could be discussed here. This extensive extract is deliberately extracted to show how maximalism in the novel is reflected.

“Thank you Mr. Chebodi. Where is Ajeebuax exactly located?”

“First of I have to make one correction and then forward a remark. To begin with, my beloved country is not just Ajeebuax. It is the people’s Justice, Freedom Democratic Republic of Ajeebuax. Speaking of the remark I hinted at before. At the sound of your question I just couldn’t help the impression that you became a journalist without doing your elementary and middle grade schooling. Is that not it?”

“What?” ...

“Had you done at least your elementary and middle grade schooling in your country, you wouldn’t have failed to know where Ajeebuax is located. Kids of any country the world over, in grade two, three or four know of it beyond demur. All you go to do is neither Exjuleism nor Nuclear Physics nor rocket Engineering. Go to a shop on a street corner, buy atlas, and help yourself to it. That is what it takes to know my Ajeebuax...here you are calling yourself a journalist when you don’t know the first thing where Ajeebuax is located. Now to answer your question...People’s Justice, Freedom and Democratic Republic of Ajeebuax is located at the point where it has always been since the year dot” (pp.303-304).

The question that the journalist asked Chebodi could be addressed with one or two sentences, probably with a word. However, Chebodi has said a lot that has nothing to do with the point of discussion. His reaction could not be the answer for the question what he is responsible to react on. Therefore, maximalism is highly exploited in this way.

As it has been mentioned so far, maximalism is reflected in only the novel, *Borrowing Freedom*. It is not clearly shown in other novels understudy. That is why the novel, *Borrowing Freedom*, has relatively longer size-composed of five hundred and eighty nearer to six hundred pages. These are some of the examples attempted to show how Maximalism is depicted in the novel, *Borrowing Freedom*.

In general, the analysis of the novels selected to the study has been dealt so far. This is made on the study “A postmodernist Reading of Selected Ethiopian Novels in English”. The novels have been read in relation to the chief postmodern narrative strategies, such as interrogating reality behind human mind in religious, political, cultural and moral aspects; magical realism in relation to fantasy, ironical narratives, defamiliarized narratives and black humour; fragmentation,

metafiction, maximalism, intertextuality, and the denial of superior over inferior cultural representations. Taking the current chapter which deals with the differences between/among the individual novels into consideration, the next section is dealt with some brief differences and similarities among the novels analysed so far. As long as the paper is on a postmodernist reading, these similarities and differences are made from the views of basic postmodern narrative strategies.

### **6.3. Similarities and Differences of the Selected Novels**

As the analysis and interpretation of the novels so far indicate, the novels have many similarities and some differences in line with basic postmodern narrative strategies. Taking the analysis so far into considerations, from the different chief postmodern strategies, ‘maximalism’, a concept which refers to the utilization of much more descriptions, explanations, elaborations cumulatively the existence of very extensive discourses, is the feature characterized in only one of the novels, in *Borrowing Freedom*. Therefore, there is no maximalism as a dominant narrative strategy in the narratives of other novels. Likewise, the denial of superior over inferior cultural presentation is a postmodern narrative strategy which is dominantly reflected in only the narratives of *Land of the Yellow Bull*.

Magical realism is there in the narratives of all the novels. In contrast to other novels, it is not abundantly there in the narratives of *Land of the Yellow Bull*. It is mainly found in the here and there parts of *Borrowing Freedom*. It is mostly reflected in the form of irony. Magical realism in *Eyes and Mist* is related to the character traits of Abi’s, the most rounded character.

Irony is one of the basic ways in which magical realism is achieved, and as the analysis made so far can be taken as a guarantee, it is dominantly treated in the novels, *Borrowing Freedom* and *The Thirteenth Sun*. Therefore, though ironical narratives are there in the four novels under discussion, the narratives of *Borrowing Freedom* and *The Thirteenth Sun* (satiric narratives) are preoccupied with full of ironical discourses. Ironies are also typical features in the novel *Land of the Yellow Bull*. Some ironical narratives in this novel are narrated as narratives related with the denial of superior over inferior cultural presentation. Magical realism under the notion of postmodernism is related to the narration of unusual narrative as normal narrative.

As the analysis made in the last three consecutive chapters indicates, almost, all the four novels under discussion are similar in most of the basic postmodern narrative strategies. Though the degree among the narratives of the novels varies, basic postmodern narrative strategies, such as interrogation of reality, metafiction, fragmentation, intertextuality and excreta are depicted in all the four novels. In simple terms, except the already identified differences as explained this chapter, all the four novels analysed so far are similar. Having all the previous extensive discussions concerning the novels, the next part of the dissertation leads to the last chapter which deals with the precise conclusions drawn from the analysis made so far.

## Chapter Seven: Conclusion

As a final chapter of the dissertation, this deals with the conclusions drawn from the theoretical and analytical discussions in the previous chapters, especial from the last three chapters which deal with the analysis and interpretation. Practical analysis as per the formulated theoretical framework has been dealt on the novels, namely, *Borrowing Freedom*, *Eyes and Mist*, *The Thirteenth Sun* and *Land of the Yellow Bull*. Therefore, it is possible to deal with the following conclusions.

The dissertation, **A Postmodernist Reading of Selected Ethiopian Novels in English**, has been justifiably necessitated as a result of the few studies of Ethiopian novels in English in general and the absence in particular of studies on Ethiopian novels in English from postmodernism viewpoints. Thus, this dissertation aspires to make contributions in studies in Ethiopian literature in English. Postmodernism is used as window of criticism in this study in making Ethiopian literature in English as a point of discussion. As a result of Eurocentric standards, Ethiopian literature in English has been left aside. Hence, postmodernism has paved the way to the researcher of this study, for matters related to the standard in labeling texts have nothing to do with postmodernism view point. In other words, as the analysis is taken for granted, postmodernism in this study is used to show some narratives which bring challenging practices on conventionally accepted matters.

As is mentioned, some selected Ethiopian novels like; *Borrowing Freedom*, *Eyes and Mist*, *The Thirteenth Sun* and *Land of the Yellow Bull* are explored from postmodern perspectives. The chief postmodern narrative strategies discussed include, interrogating reality, magical realism metafiction, maximalism, fragmentation and denial of superior over inferior cultural presentation. Hence, the following ideas are drawn from the analysis and interpretation.

The novels analysed so far are preoccupied with the basic postmodern narrative strategies. From the very beginning, there are writing styles which are not conventionally accepted. For example, *Borrowing Freedom* is composed of extensive dialogues that the characters uninterruptedly go through. Characters are engaged in uninterrupted dialogues for three and above consecutive chapters, and this is one typical feature of postmodernism. As a result of the incorporation of unnecessary details, the aforementioned novel is full of comments, descriptions, and excessive elaborations which in turn, lead the novel to reflect one basic feature of postmodernism-



maximalism which is the peculiar postmodern feature reflected in only *Borrowing Freedom*. As a result of this postmodern feature, the narrative is full of descriptions even full of elaborations and descriptions which are not directly related to the narrative levels in the frame narrative at large. This has cumulatively led the novel to be relatively bulky.

In addition, the novel, *Borrowing Freedom*, comes to an end in the way that can lead readers into filling the gap. This is achieved with unusual way of conclusion. The narrative comes to its end with the phrase: ‘**The Beginning**’. It is unnatural to get this phrase at the end of any text; in turn, this could be associated with one basic feature of postmodern texts. Therefore, the readers are left to use their own imaginative guessing skill. Therefore, it leads readers to have a mental gym on the next plot line of the narrative.

Similar to *Borrowing Freedom*, the defamiliarized narrative in *Eyes and Mist* starts with the naming style of the author. The author of this novel uses his mother’s name as a surname. This naming style is not natural in Ethiopian naming style. Writing his given name followed by his father’s name could have been enough. However, the author has added his mother’s name as a surname, and this is unfamiliar in Ethiopian naming style. Surprisingly, using the female’s name as a naming has negative connotations in the structural naming style of Ethiopia.

The case in point is also similar in the novel, *The Thirteenth Sun*. Taking the number of months that most of the world knows as a background, the phrase “The Thirteenth Sun/Month” is something strange, for it is known that a year has twelve months. Though it foregrounds the case that the calendar Ethiopians use, first it creates something strange which could not easily be understood, for written in English the primary targeted readers of the novel could not be Ethiopians. In addition, this novel has also a defamiliarized narrative in relation the date(s) regarding to the celebration of saint Abbo. To put it in a nutshell, the aforementioned features and other similar unusual presentation of events and incidents are features of postmodern texts or narratives, and they are depicted in almost all the novels.

Different challenges to the so called reality have been provided in the narration of the novels. In other words, interrogation of reality is a dominant narrative feature exploited in here and there parts of the novels. This is achieved because of the assumption behind postmodern thought. Postmodernism does not accept only one reality. There are different realities in which one’s

reality may not be so to the other. The interrogations are made in the political, cultural, religious and moral realities.

As a result of the denial of one mode of reality, the plot lines of *Borrowing Freedom* and *Land of the Yellow Bull* are full of ironies which deviate from the various conventionally accepted elements. More specifically, the narratives of *Borrowing Freedom* and *Eyes and Mist* are full of defamiliarized things, fantasized narrative elements and various discrepancies which collectively refer to one typical feature of postmodern narrative strategy - magical realism. The case is similar in *The Thirteenth Sun* in which most of the narratives are full of satiric concepts.

Magical realism is one chief feature of postmodern texts where two contradictory elements or binary pairs, 'magic' and 'reality', are used as normal and day-to-day engagements. To this effect, the novels are composed of magical realities in the form of defamiliarized, fantasized, black humourous and ironical elements.

The novels analysed so far, are full of fragmented narratives. For example, the story of *Borrowing Freedom* is situated in an imaginative country, The People's Justice, Freedom and Democratic Republic of Ajeebuax. It is a country which is not known for 'real' - there is not such a country in the world. And the way in which the narratives are made to know the whereabouts of this country is not clear. In addition, the narrative made in relation to their ideology, the political ideology (Exjuleism) which the leaders of Ajeebuax propagate to lead their country is vague, and it could not be understood what this ideology is. For one thing, there is no such reality in the real world, and for the other thing, the narratives are not framed in the way how this ideology could easily be understood. Moreover, there are also other narrative elements which are full of absurdity. These fragmented narratives are situated in different parts of *Eyes and Mist* and *The Thirteenth Sun*. All these narrative elements depicted in the novels are typical features of postmodern texts.

Moreover, metafiction is also one noticeable feature of the novels as postmodern texts. Metafiction is a postmodern feature which refers to the situation in which readers are informed about the fake narrative aspects of the story they are reading. For example, the cumulative tone of *The Thirteenth Sun* is all about satiric narratives which cumulatively suggest the fake and miserable life Ethiopians lead. Under this notion of metafiction, the analysis discusses the issue of historiographic metafiction which is one of the chief features of postmodern texts in which

historical events and figures are used for the development of the story in narratives rather than dealing with these historical events and figures themselves. A special conception of time in postmodernism is also discussed in relation to postmodern thoughts where there is no a need of categorizing time into segments as past, present and future.

Furthermore, intertextuality, the interweaving among various texts in a field and across various fields of study is reflected in the novels under study. This feature is dominantly depicted in all the novels analysed. In the novels, various intertextual narratives are discussed. Intertextuality in postmodern texts is different from intertextuality in its conventional aspects. In postmodern texts, intertextuality is used to show the distance between or among discourses. It is mostly designed to make some adjustments in the discourse of the former text. In other words, intertextuality under the notion of postmodernism is presented in a reversed form-form presented differently from what it is normally known, and it is typically depicted in all the novels analysed.

The last postmodern narrative strategy discussed is related to the notion of denying superior over inferior cultural presentation. Denial of superior over inferior cultural presentation is mainly depicted in *Land of the Yellow Bull* where Charlotte in *Land of the Yellow Bull*, a character from the so called superior culture, is highly immersed in the Hamar culture which is labeled as inferior. In addition, both the mind style which could be taken as culture of the upper and lower classes in *The Thirteenth Sun* are intermingled with commentaries are made upon the cultural practices of the upper class, while a sympathetic tone to the lower class is included. In other words, this postmodern feature is very rarely reflected in *The Thirteenth Sun* too.

In conclusion, the novels are read from the vantage points of the different chief narrative strategies of postmodern texts, and they are characterized by the formerly mentioned and other similar features of postmodern texts. On top of their own peculiarities, all the novels are similar in their disclosure of postmodern narrative strategies. To wind up this dissertation with a recommendation, all the discussions in here are made through reading the novels from only the chief postmodern narrative strategies. Further investigations upon the novels from different aspects and windows of criticism; even from postmodern issues in a far more detail is welcome. After all, in postmodern notions, there is no a claiming of one fixed meaning and interpretation. Therefore, further investigations upon the study area are encouraged.

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